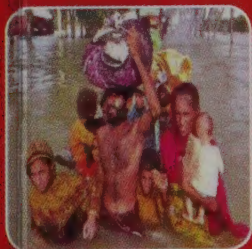


CHURCH'S RESPONSE TO THE CHALLENGES OF ASIA IN THE LIGHT OF THE CATHOLIC SOCIAL TEACHING



(Bishops' Institute of Social Action-BISA-VIII)



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Concerns

Labourers

Migrants

Indigenous Peoples

Women and Children

Eco-just Society

Conflicts and Peace

Editor: Fr. Nithiya OFM. Cap

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CHURCH'S RESPONSE TO THE CHALLENGES OF ASIA IN THE LIGHT OF THE CST

(Bishops Institute of Social Action-BISA-VIII)

18-24, January, 2012, Camillian Pastoral Centre, Bangkok, Thailand



Editor

Fr. Nithiya OFM. CAP

*Executive Secretary,
Office of Human Development, FABC*

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1451 P. Guevarra Street, Sta. Cruz,
Manila 1014, Philippines
Tel. No: (+63 2) 731-3768;
Fax No: (+63 2) 743-2618
E-mail: ohdcontact@gmail.com

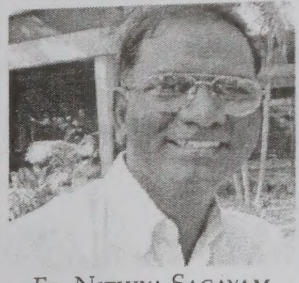
Mathias Church, Ashok Nagar,
Chennai - 600083, India
Tel: +91-44-2366 1561
E-mail: nithiyas@gmail.com

**Office of Human Development
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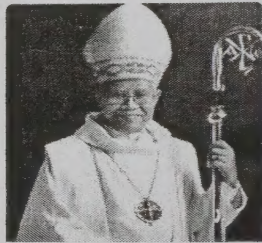
**MOST REV. CHARLES
M. Bo, SDB**

Chairperson, OHD-FABC



**FR. NITHIYA SAGAYAM
OFM. CAP**

Executive Secretary, OHD-FABC



**ABP. ANICETUS SINAGA
OFM Cap, Indonesia**

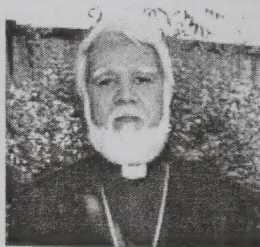


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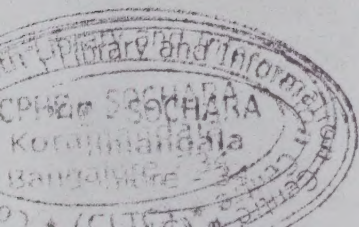
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Japan**



**ABP. JOSEPH COUTTS
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FOREWORD

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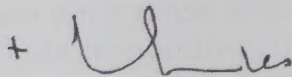
Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Greetings of Peace to you on behalf of the FABC Office of Human Development! I welcome you to this material from the Bishops' Institute of Social Action (BISA) – VIII. There are input sessions, powerpoint presentations, video clips and interviews from resource persons, Bishops and other participants.

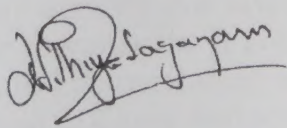
The Special programme of *Bishops Institute of Social Action – BISA-VIII* was on the Response of the Church to the Struggles and Challenges of Asia in the light of the Catholic Social Teaching (CST) held in Bangkok, Thailand from 18-24 Jan. 2012. In keeping with the rich tradition of the BISA Series, after a long gap of 25 years, we began this edition by focusing on the face to face experience of the participants in being with the poor and sharing their struggles. This was followed by three days of reflections on the possible response of the Church. The immersion - exposure programme was held in *serving the HIV/AIDS patients, interactions with the Victims of Human Trafficking, Staying with the Migrants and Indigenous Peoples*.

Many Bishops, priests and religious men and women along with the lay delegates from the Commissions of the Episcopal Conferences and Church Based Organisations participated in this programme. After this exposure, there were inputs and workshops on the **six priority issues of Asia in the light of CST**: 1. *Labour and Rights of labourers*. 2. *Migrants and their families* 3. *Indigenous Peoples* 4. *Women and Children* 5. *Conflicts and Peace Building* 6. *Eco-just Society*

In the following pages, there are input documents, power point presentations, Country-wise reports, and video clips of the interviews of bishops and other participants. As you enter into this pilgrimage, we wish you deeper commitment into the struggles of the least, last and the lost by keeping their concern under top priority in our thought, word and actions.



Most Rev. Charles Bo
Chairperson, OHD-FABC



Fr. Nithiya OFM. Cap
Executive Secretary, OHD-FABC

The Reign of God....

It helps, now and then, to step back and take a long view. The kingdom is not only beyond our efforts, it is even beyond our vision. We accomplish in our lifetime only a tiny fraction of the magnificent enterprise that is God's work.

Nothing we do is complete, which is a way of saying that the kingdom always lies beyond us. No statement says all that could be said. No prayer fully expresses our faith. No confession brings perfection. No pastoral visit brings wholeness. No program accomplishes the Church's mission. No set of goals and objectives includes everything. This is what we are about.

We plant the seeds that one day will grow. We water seeds already planted, knowing that they hold future promise. We lay foundations that will need further development. We provide yeast that produces far beyond our capabilities. We cannot do everything, and there is a sense of liberation in realizing that.

This enables us to do something, and to do it very well. It may be incomplete, but it is a beginning, a step along the way, an opportunity for the Lord's grace to enter and do the rest. We may never see the end results, but that is the difference between the master builder and the worker. We are workers, not master builders; ministers, not messiahs. We are prophets of a future not our own.

—Prayer attributed to Archbishop Romero

MESSAGE OF CARDINAL TURKSON FOR BISA-VIII



CARDINAL PETER KODWO
TURKSON (PRESIDENT)

In the name of the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, I warmly greet my Lord Archbishops and Bishops and all the Participants in the 2012 Bishops' Institute for Social Action now underway at the beautiful Camilian Pastoral Centre and marking the 40th anniversary of the Office of Human Development. While I regret not being able to join you in person, I am very thankful for the opportunity to address you a message to stimulate

personal and group reflection. As you consider how the Church is responding pastorally and socio-pastorally, in the light of Catholic Social Doctrine, to the needs of God's people in the vast social realm of life, there is much to be grateful for and there are many challenges waiting to be taken up.

It has always been the Church's desire that everyone's encounter with Jesus Christ lead to

- ✱ deep and ongoing conversion towards an ever fuller life of faith
- ✱ lived commitment to the fundamental Gospel commandment to love one another
- ✱ bold witnessing to the Risen Lord in our midst

Christ our Lord accompanies our ministry of service with signs of God's grace at work, not only in individual hearts, but also in social relations and interactions. So our socio-pastoral ministry, through which we help God's neediest people to discover and undertake a way forward out of the Egypt's of their enslavements and sufferings, is a sign of the presence of God's Kingdom. Indeed, as Benedict XVI teaches us: "Man's earthly activity, when inspired and sustained by charity, contributes to the building of the universal city of God, which is the goal of the history of the human family."¹ This earthly activity has always been a response to God's saving initiative towards us. It is His people responding, in the Old Testament, to His revelation and covenant, and in the New Testament, to *faith in Christ* and to *his charity*.

¹ Benedict XVI, *Caritas in veritate*, § 7.



The Church's Heritage of Social Teaching



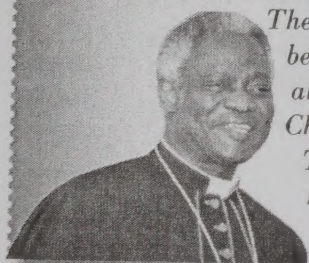
The concern for human social wellbeing is therefore not a novelty, but goes all the way back to our foundational Scriptures. Not only did the prophets, particularly Amos and Isaiah, forcefully remind Israel of its holy obligations towards justice and the poor; there were also the Sabbath institutions which would regularly restore the social order to a more just equilibrium. The *Jubilee* or *Seventh Sabbath* year was a year of favour to set the downtrodden free and offer everyone a new lease on life, ensuring that "there will be no one in need among you" (Dt 15:4).

To this restoration of divine justice upon the earth, Jesus dramatically appeals when launching his ministry in the synagogue at Nazareth (Lk.4:16ff.), unfurling the banner under which he will carry out his mission of bringing us into the Kingdom of his and our heavenly Father. After his resurrection and ascension, the early Church dedicated herself to the Word of God (*liturgia*), communion (*koinonia*) and serving (*diakonia*) the needy (Acts 2:44–47; 4:32–35).

During the centuries of persecution, Christian communities were deeply involved in providing social services. Once Christianity was legalized, the Church was freer to play its role of evangelizing the social order, in word and especially in deed:

“The spirit of Christian charity and devoted self-sacrifice which had once so impressed the pagan world was by no means dead. Rather, the needs of the times called forth new efforts in the service of Christian charity. History records innumerable examples of practical works of mercy. The Church was a social power in the declining culture of those days. The bishops were obliged to substitute for a corrupt and decrepit officialdom: to assume the duties of public welfare servants; to supply the needy and suffering with food, clothing and shelter; and in many instances, even to organize the defence of cities...

The relief of the poor, the care of slaves, of prisoners and of travellers became their concern. A part of the Church's income was set aside to aid the poor. In large cities such as Constantinople and Antioch, the Church's work among the poor was to a great extent highly organized. There arose many institutions for the relief of every human need: hospitals, poor houses, orphanages, foundling homes, shelters for travellers, etc., which had been entirely unknown in pre-Christian times.”



² Karl Bihlmeyer, *Church History*, Vol. 1. Westminster; Newman Press, 1968, p. 272.

Message of Cardinal Turkson for BISA-VIII

Down through the ages, many different Catholic agencies—diocesan and lay, religious orders and ecclesial movements—carried-on and developed such charitable responses to the human condition in the light of Christian faith, and these various responses eventually fed into explicit **social teachings** beginning with Pope Leo XIII's groundbreaking Encyclical *Rerum Novarum* (1891). Thus, the Social Doctrine of the Church³ orients the Christian, armed with the *faith* and *charity* of Christ and engaged in the social order, in the promotion of justice, peace and authentic human development, that is, the flourishing of the human person, community and entire environment.

During the immersion experience which you have just had amidst migrants and indigenous peoples on the outskirts of Bangkok, you made their deep concerns your own and appreciated what the implementation of Catholic Social Doctrine was trying to achieve among them. Throughout Asia, the priority issues include the struggles of indigenous peoples; labourers, migrants and their families; men and women, the very young and the very old; and current challenges facing them such as poverty, unemployment and exploitative labour; conflicts and peace building; human rights and ecological care for creation.⁴ To all these issues and challenges our sociopastoral ministries respond, consistently building a fuller expression of justice and charity into the structures of human life in common.⁵

The Way of the Shepherd

Very far from abstract or static, Catholic Social Doctrine must engender a *mission*, an *activity*, for merely to make proposals without moving on to action is an ideology. "The task of the Bishops [is] to transform theology into pastoral care, namely into a very concrete pastoral ministry in which the great perspectives found in sacred Scripture and Tradition find application in the activity of Bishops and priests in specific times and places."⁶

³ The term "social doctrine" goes back to Pope Pius XI and designates the doctrinal *corpus* concerning issues relevant to society which, from the Encyclical Letter *Rerum Novarum* of Pope Leo XIII, developed in the Church through the Magisterium of the Roman Pontiffs and the Bishops in communion with them (*Compendium*, § 87).

⁴ These are the issues to be considered in the light of the Church's Social Doctrine at the BISA-VIII.

⁵ John Baptist Janssens S.J., "Instruction on the Social Apostolate," 10.10.1949.

⁶ *Africae Munus*, § 10, quoting Benedict XVI *Address to the Members of the Roman Curia*, 21.12.2009, identifies the whole work of the Synod as this "transforming of theology into pastoral care"



Church's Response to the Challenges of Asia in the Light of the CST

Reflecting on the Church's place in the public sphere and her role there, Pope Benedict is clear about the delicate character of this enterprise: "The task we have to set for ourselves is not an easy one, situated as it is somewhere between immediate engagement in politics -- which lies outside the Church's direct competence -- and the potential for withdrawal or evasion present in a theological and spiritual speculation which could serve as an escape from concrete historical responsibility."⁷

It is very important, then, that one not confuse *pastoral* with *politics*, *pastoral action* with *political action*. In response to his own question, "Did the Synod Fathers succeed in finding the rather narrow path between mere theological theory and immediate political action, the path of the 'shepherd'?" the Holy Father replied: "In my brief address at the end of the Synod I answered this question in the affirmative, in a conscious and explicit way."⁸

The *way of the shepherd*, then, is the recommended path to follow when as Church we try to respond to the miseries and clamours for social justice of God's people. On this path, the long tradition of translating scripture and theology into pastoral care, which constitutes the *social teaching of the Church*, is our most reliable useful guide. Based on principles of *human dignity, common good, the universal destination of the goods of the earth, the brotherhood of the human family, solidarity and subsidiarity*, Catholic Social Doctrine places the human person, his total and integral development, at the centre of all world systems of thought and activity.

The way of the shepherd reminds man of his vocation to gift and transcendence and so to evangelize our world of inequalities and poverty with a Christian logic of gift and gratuitousness. When man's activity is inspired by divine love and justice, he builds an earthly city which is an anticipation of the universal city of God.⁹

New Evangelization of the Social

Turning now to the "many challenges waiting to be taken up" mentioned at the start, a providential indication of what these might be may be found in the fact that your VIII Bishops' Institute for Social Action opens this year of 2012 which, in nine months, will

⁷ *Africae Munus*, § 17. Cf. *Caritas in veritate*, §§ 5-9.

⁸ Benedict XVI *Address to the Members of the Roman Curia*, 21.12.2009. The opposition between "pastoral action" and "political action" is to be seen in terms of the former: Pastoral action is understood as the *way of the shepherd or pastor*, while lay people have the vocation and competence to engage in politics and other means for the humanization of the social order.

⁹ Cf. *Caritas in veritate*, § 7.



Message of Cardinal Turkson for BISA-VIII

see the Church celebrating the Thirteenth General Synod of Bishops on the New Evangelization for the Transmission of the Christian Faith. And so I think it is very timely to consult the *Lineamenta* for a working understanding of new evangelization and to survey the various sectors of society in urgent need of evangelization. What light do these shed on the priorities of your Office of Human Development and the Justice-and-Peace Commissions of your respective Conferences and Dioceses?

The *Lineamenta* call the new evangelization “a frame-of-mind, a courageous manner of acting and Christianity’s capacity to know how to read and interpret the new situations in human history which, in recent decades, have become the places to proclaim and witness to the Gospel.” These “new situations” or sectors concern society, cultures, economics, civic life and religion. They include

- ✱ Cultures, which risk losing “the capacity to listen to the Gospel as a living and life-giving message”.¹⁰
- ✱ “The great phenomenon of migration is increasingly forcing people to leave their countries of origin for more urban settings, thereby changing the ethnic make-up of our cities, our nations and our continents.”¹¹
- ✱ Media and communications, whereby “no place in the world is beyond [their] reach and, consequently, unaffected by the media and digital culture, which is fast becoming the *forum* of public life and social interaction”.
- ✱ Economics – for example, our own Pontifical Council published a Note on *Reforming the International Financial and Monetary Systems in the Context of Global Public Authority* with the hope of establishing “rules in a global market intended to ensure greater justice in relations among peoples”.¹²
- ✱ Finally, civic and political life, where we see “new economic, political and religious forces ... emerging in global politics” which create “an unprecedented yet totally unknown situation which is rich in potential but also fraught with risks and new

¹⁰ All the quotations in this list are from the *Lineamenta* (preparatory document) for the XIII Ordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops on the New Evangelization for the Transmission of the Christian Faith (October 2012), § 6. http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/synod/documents/rc_synod_doc_20110202_lineamenta-xiii-assembly_en.html

¹¹ “At times [Christians] are forced to leave the countries they have helped to build because of persistent tensions and policies which frequently relegate them to being second-class spectators of national life” (Benedict XVI, *Speech to Diplomatic Corps*, 9.1.12).

¹² http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/synod/documents/rc_synod_doc_20110809_towards_reforming_eng.pdf

temptations of dominion and power". This sector includes the following sub-headings which closely echo the Office of Human Development's own priorities:

- ★ the duty to seek peace,
- ★ the development and liberation of peoples;
- ★ improvement in forms of world and national governments;
- ★ the construction of possible forms of listening, living together, dialogue and collaboration by various cultures and religions;
- ★ the safeguarding of the rights of persons, entire peoples and, above all, minorities;
- ★ support for the most vulnerable in society;
- ★ the stewardship of creation and the commitment to the future of our planet.

It is striking how this brief catalogue illuminates aspects of the very social concerns that you have been hearing about from those whom you were accompanying these past few days as well as from your own people back home. We certainly look forward to the fruits of the Synod's deliberations, especially the Apostolic Exhortation which in due time the Holy Father will promulgate, to shed light on where the Gospel most urgently needs to be incarnated in the social reality around us. In Asia I believe it is especially important to distinguish clearly, in our minds and in our action, between abusing social action to proselytize, and properly evangelizing the social order or, in other words, employing and applying Catholic Social Doctrine as a (or even the) privileged tool of evangelization.

Meanwhile, during this Institute, may I invite you to reflect on how Catholic Social Teaching is already responding to the needs of the poor and the marginalised and how it can be further implemented at the Conference, Diocesan and Parish levels as well as in BECs (Basic Ecclesial Communities), BCCs (Basic Christian Communities) and NCs (Neighbourhood Communities) in those multi-religious contexts where Christians and non-Christians in different parts of the vast continent of Asia can be involved together in promoting integral human welfare, oriented by the Gospel of Jesus Christ and the Social Doctrine of the Church.

During the coming days, your interactions with one another will surely deepen the socio-pastoral commitment of the Church,



Message of Cardinal Turkson for BISA-VIII

and give rise to new and strengthened programmes implementing Catholic Social Teaching. May everyone leave the 2012 Bishops' Institute for Social Action with a deepened appreciation for the rich patrimony of Catholic Social Doctrine, and may God generously bless your Institute and make it fruitful for the good of all. With the prayerful good wishes of all of us at the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, devotedly yours,

Cardinal Peter Kodwo Turkson
(President)

Rome, 22 January 2012

Those who are oppressed by poverty are the object of a preferential love on the part of the Church which, since her origin and in spite of the failings of many of her members, has not ceased to work for their relief, defense, and liberation through numerous works of charity which remain indispensable always and everywhere.

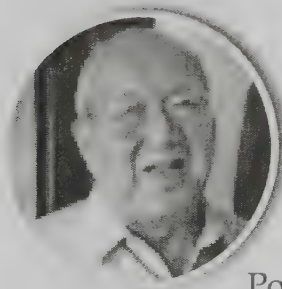
—Catechism of the Catholic Church # 2448

“Love for widows and orphans, prisoners, and the sick and needy of every kind, is as essential to [the Church] as the ministry of the sacraments and preaching of the Gospel”

—Pope Benedict XVI, *Deus Caritas Est*, no. 22

BECOMING AN ASIAN CHURCH OF THE POOR. TWELVE YEARS OF BISA

Bp. Julio Xavier Labayen, OCD



"It is our resolve, first of all to be more truly the Church of the Poor" After looking at an Asia largely marked by poverty, the Asian bishops set for themselves this primary task at their first meeting on the occasion of the visit of Pope Paul VI to Manila in 1970.

The task of translating this into reality was assigned to the Office for Human Development, set up in 1972 by the Asian bishops. Already in 1967 in his encyclical "Progress of the Peoples," Pope Paul VI emphasized the need for authentic human development – "a development which is for each and all the transition from less human conditions to more human conditions" and "embracing the higher values of love and friendship of prayer and contemplation."

Again at the first Plenary Assembly of the newly formed FABC, the bishops agreed that "the search for holiness and the search for justice, evangelization and promotion of true human development and liberation, are not duly opposed, but make up today the integral preaching of the Gospel especially in Asia. (Taipei, 1974)

BISA I-VII Themes

- ★ BISA-I: "THE SOCIAL DIMENSION OF THE GOSPEL" MANILA, PHILIPPINES, MARCH 1-15, 1974
- ★ BISA-II: SECOND BISHOPS' INSTITUTE FOR SOCIAL ACTION (BISA II), FINAL REFLECTIONS; April 19, 1975
- ★ BISA-IV "COLLEGIALITY OF BISHOPS FOR HUMAN DEVELOPMENT", Antipolo, Metro Manila, Philippines, March 4 – 9, 1978
- ★ BISA-V: "SEARCH, CHALLENGE AND COLLEGIAL RESPONSE IN HUMAN DEVELOPMENT" Baguio City, Philippines. May 21 – June 1, 1979
- ★ BISA-VI: *Kandy, Sri Lanka February 3 – 8, 1983*
- ★ BISA-VII ; *Hua Hin, Thailand, January 15 – 23, 1986*



The BISAs: Becoming the Asian Church of the poor in the 1970s.....



Between 1974-83, the Office for Human Development organized six Bishops' Institutes for Social Action (BISA) to involve bishops "in a continuing and communitarian dialogue of life with the poor." About 25 percent of Asia's bishops attended those institutes.

The statements issued by the six BISAs manifest a progression in their understanding of the implications of becoming the Church of the Poor. BISAs I-III stressed the staggering extent of Asia's material poverty. "Our people are not poor as far as cultural traditions, human values and religious insights are concerned." (BISA I – II) The participants saw that material poverty is not an accident, much less a necessity, but rather the inevitable result of unjust social, economic and political structures designed for the aggrandizement of the well-to-do at the expense of the poor. As a witness to Christ, the Church, the bishops stressed, must make a whole-hearted commitment to the poor to opt in their favor. But what does this mean in practice?

"It does not mean merely to work for the poor, as it were from outside of from above, like a beneficent institution or an administrative agency."

"It does mean to work *with* the poor, and therefore to *be* with them, and so learn from them their real needs and aspirations, and to enable them to identify and articulate those needs and aspirations, if they are as yet unable to do so." (BISA I)

Dialogue



The first step in the process of working with the poor is true dialogue. This word appeared often throughout the statements of BISA I – III.

"The first consequence of this option is that they [Church leaders] must open and enlarge and intensify a continuing dialogue with their people at every level of community." (BISA I)

"We feel the need to live in contact with and close to the weak, to the people in need, without waiting for them to come to us. In a word, we acknowledge the need to work at the grassroots level." (BISA II)

This genuine dialogue at every level especially with the grassroots should be Asian both in its methodology and in scope, that is, it should not be limited to Catholics.

"And let it (this dialogue) be truly Asian, employing the procedures for arriving at consensus for action which our peoples have themselves elaborated. . ." Further, "the continuing dialogue with people cannot be limited to the Christian community, but must reach out beyond it to all other communities in search of integral human development." (BISA I)

For Church leaders to be credible participants in this process of dialogue, "the Church should revise her own lifestyle and institutions in order to first realize within herself whatever she has to say about social justice." (BISA II)

Unjust Structures

Along with the ability to hold true dialogue with the poor, another essential requirement for working with them is a firm grasp of how social, economic, and political systems operate to their detriment.

"We cannot jump from our faith experiences to the concrete decisions of social action without due technical investigations and due account of the ideologies under whose influence we are living.: (BISA II)

"With the help of our resource personnel [at the BISA], we have seen that many of our Church institutions designed to help the poor, not only do not do so, but may, in fact, have unintended effects against their interests. They are caught as it were, in the unjust social system and structure of our age." (BISA III). Unjust structures have been called social sin by some theologians in an attempt to link traditional Church concepts with new socio-economic interests.

Social Analysis of Asia

The methodology of BISA IV-V emphasized, more than the previous BISAs, exposure. Talks were reduced to a minimum. The bishops first analyze the situation in different Asian countries and found the same basic patterns, the difference being that they appeared in varying degrees: growing poverty, a shameful and widening gap between rich and poor, authoritarian governments, violence, fear alienation. But this time they came "to see the causes of this distressing situation."

Becoming an Asian Church of the Poor: Twelve Years of BISA

"Because of colonialism and feudalism and the introduction of Western classical capitalism, the traditional economic texture of Asian society with its in-built balances has been disrupted. Often the economics of these countries are not geared primarily to satisfying the requirements of the nation but rather to responding to external markets and, within the nation, not to the basic needs of the people – food, housing, education, jobs, but to the demands of a consumer society." (BISA I, 3-4).

The principal beneficiaries of this system are the foreign markets and investors and the local elites. The victims are the poor, who are the majority of the people. This concentration of power and resources in the hands of a few ensures that all the society's institutions will be biased against the poor, for example, education, housing, health care, employment opportunities and law. Wittingly or unwittingly, the Church has been party to these arrangements. (BISA IV, 5-6)

Basic Communities: Signs of Hope.....

The bishops voice their hopes and express their commitment to supporting the formation of basic communities. "We also saw certain signs of hope. Despite difficulties, the people are beginning to become aware of the causes of their problems and to organize themselves in various ways to solve them. The Church does not stand with them in many places. From our point of view the efforts of people to develop themselves and build their new communities are far more important than production figures. The growth of people and communities is the principal concern of the Church." (BISA IV, 7)

"Asia's greatest resource is its people, especially its young . . . We saw this idealism [of youth] translating itself into all sorts of initiatives of people, by people, for people. The growth of basic communities is the best illustration of this phenomenon: people becoming more and more aware of the real causes of their problems and acting together to solve their problems even in the face of seemingly impossible constraints." (BISA V)

The Church of the Poor: An Option of Faith.....

Faced with the awesome challenges to human development at the end of the 1970s, the bishops at BISA V (1979) saw a further challenge based on faith.



"The Lord of history is at work in that world of poverty, making sense out of His action among them, discerning the direction of His action with them – this we felt deeply within us was the more specific challenge we have to face. It is a challenge we have to respond to in faith, with faith. For the challenge forces us to re-examine our notion of ourselves as Church, as the People of God. These challenges lead us to only one conclusion: we must strive to become truly the Church of the Poor. (BISA V)

The Church of the Poor: A preferential option for the poor.....

The Asian bishops in BISA V have considerably deepened the understanding of the practical implications of becoming the Church of the Poor since the first Asian bishops meeting in 1970 and BISA I in 1974.

"But what does it mean to be the Church of the Poor? Is not the Church for all men and women, for rich and poor, for saints and sinners? We found an answer in the way many Churches of Asia are moving in the direction of greater and greater involvement with the life of their people; their simply being with the poor, their attempts at working programs of human development – integral, respectful of the people's dignity, attuned to their cultures; their standing with them in their hard struggle for justice and self empowerment; their insistence that the rich become themselves real members of the Church of the Poor by fulfilling their obligations in justice and charity toward the poor. The Church of the Poor must do all this. That is not all the Church of the Poor means certainly. But we see it does lead to movement in that direction. For it does indicate a preferential option and respect for the poor, expressing in practical terms Christ's own vision of His mission." (Lk 4:18-19)

The Perennial Hope of BISA I – V.....

The BISA ended on a note of hope, commitment to the poor and heightened awareness that this is a work of God.

"We end with a word of hope. Our problems are great, but the human potential of our people is also great. If only they can liberate themselves from the outer and inner constraints that bind them, they will themselves take up and bring about their own integral human development." (BISA I, 15)

Becoming an Asian Church of the Poor: Twelve Years of BISA

"The power we have, be it charismatic, moral, political, social, intellectual, etc. – should always be used in the service of others, especially of the poor and weak." (BISA II, 25)

"Our involvement cannot exclude what used to be called secular and profane. In all these spheres, God and His Christ are active in the Spirit, expecting our partnership and collaboration in the shaping and reshaping of human history and human destiny." (BISA III, 29).

In BISA IV, besides the growth of basic communities, the bishops indicate "another sign of hope is the growing cooperation among the religious of Asia. Religion, which once may have been used to sanction the status quo, is gradually coming to be a source of courage and vision toward needed social change."

The same theme of hopeful dialogue with the Asian religions appears at the end of the BISA V statement:

"We wish to facilitate a further dialogue with the great religions about the meaning of faith and service in daily life. All mankind is rooted in the Christ-event; this anthropology is operative even in those who do not know Christ. Our main point of contact is the search for a new humanity and a new human family."

According to an evaluation by the Asian Social Institute of BISA I-V, the bishops moved "towards a deeper and more profound understanding of Asian realities as well as a renewed meaning of Christian mission and evangelization."

These conceptual changes were noted in five categories:

- ✱ from the dichotomy of body and soul to unitary concept. Thus human development became integral into pastoral and evangelization efforts.
- ✱ From a "ghetto mentality," the Church has broadened its views to include Asian reality.
- ✱ From charity work with a proselytizing element towards projects focusing on integral human development
- ✱ From social service to conscientization and militant collective action
- ✱ From secularism to the specifically Christian values of reconciliation and non-violence in the struggle for liberation.

The BISAs, ASI underscored, did make an "effective contribution" to the enrichment of social awareness among the Asian bishop-participants.



Despite its value as a catalyst in changing thought patterns, the BISAs had weak points elsewhere..

Looking into the second criterion of success, the effectivity of the BISAs in causing a shift in the emphasis of social action programs, the ASI evaluation showed that data does not indicate a "significant change" in emphasis. Thus, despite the change in the bishops' appreciation of reality and the Church's role in it, their diocesan programs did not reflect a marked move towards education and to organization.

ASI gave four possible interpretations:

1. that some bishops did not consider their conscientization and organization endeavors as distinct projects, and thus did not report them as such;
2. that the bishops were convinced of the new thrust but that prevailing conditions (e.g. authoritarian regimes, economic conditions, lack of trained personnel) are such that convictions can only slowly be converted into action programs;
3. that the bishops have not been convinced that a one-sided emphasis on conscientization and organization is the right approach; and,
4. that all the above are valid, each of them applying to a different group of bishops.

Other observers however, suggest that the process of calling bishops straight from their diocese to an Asian level consultation and back did not provide proper support mechanisms to help them implement concrete programs expressed in the Asian-level statements.

Still others felt that the use of structural analysis in the beginning of the meeting did not help. They recommended that an examination of the role of religion and culture be used at the start instead.

Should, the BISAs continue or not? Of the 49 respondents who answered the question, 30 categorically agreed that the BISAs go on. The figure represents 50 percent of the respondents to the ASI survey.

Preparing for Future BISAs



The ASI evaluation raised two significant points that must be considered in the discussions on whether the institutes should continue and what directions they should take.

First, the Church response to the economic, political and religious situation. BISA still has to reach the remaining three-fourths of Asian bishops with its message of option for the poor, dialogue with non-Christians and inculturation. A more vigorous program is thus needed so that the image of the Church as a "Servant-Christ" may be more greatly enhanced.

Second, the development of Christian social thought. Thus far, Asian Christian social thinking as expounded by the bishops contains the elements for a creative pastoral theology that could serve as the impetus for action towards human liberation in Asia.

Nevertheless, questions still remain. How far can Asia articulate and develop its own theology of liberation based on praxis? What specific social and cultural contexts are necessary for this theology to take root and animate the Asian struggle for liberation and integral evangelization?

These considerations not only affirmed the organization of future BISAs; they also identify future directions.

BISA VI: The Process of Becoming the Asian Church of the Poor in the 1980s.....



In the 1970s, the Asian Church saw the following challenges to human development: poverty, inequality among individuals and nations, injustice, oppressive structures, atheistic communism and imperialism in their national and international dimensions.

In 1983, BISA VI asked: Are there new challenges and increasing obstacles to human development in Asia in the 1980s?"

The new challenges that aggravate the old challenges to human development are "the increasing militarization of continent, the militant resurgence of traditional non-Christian religious like Islam, Buddhism and Hinduism and Asia's increased dependence on global economies."

There are also challenges specific to certain countries or regions of Asia. In East Asia, the ideological, political and military

manipulations of the super powers divide some countries. This becomes a threat to peace and security not only in the region but also in the whole world. In South Asia strong separatist tendencies are an increasingly dangerous force for destabilizing the area.

Peace is the aspiration of the human heart today. In the coming years the gap between the rich and poor countries will become wider and this will be a threat to world peace.

What will the Church's response be? The Church should use her spiritual and moral influence, especially in mass media to form world opinion in order to divert expenditure from armaments into resources that foster integral human development.

The proliferation of Basic Christian Communities and Basic Human Communities continues to be a sign of hope to the Church.

The dialogue of life with non-Christians on behalf of the poor, seeks the positive elements in those religions in order to make all religions together respond to the poor.

A new spirituality that will suffuse evangelization and embrace the plan of God for the whole creation is imperative. Mere individual salvation is not enough, salvation must be for the whole persons, all people and even the cosmos. This spirituality must not be inward looking but must place the Church at the service of the whole human race.

Underneath the clarifications and the sharpening of perceptions, BISA's basic commitment has not changed over the last 12 years. The BISA mission remains "a commitment to conscientization and discernment on poverty and injustice in the Asian context in the light of the Gospel for a Servant-Christ's response to the cause of social justice."

In this regard, the perennial themes are:

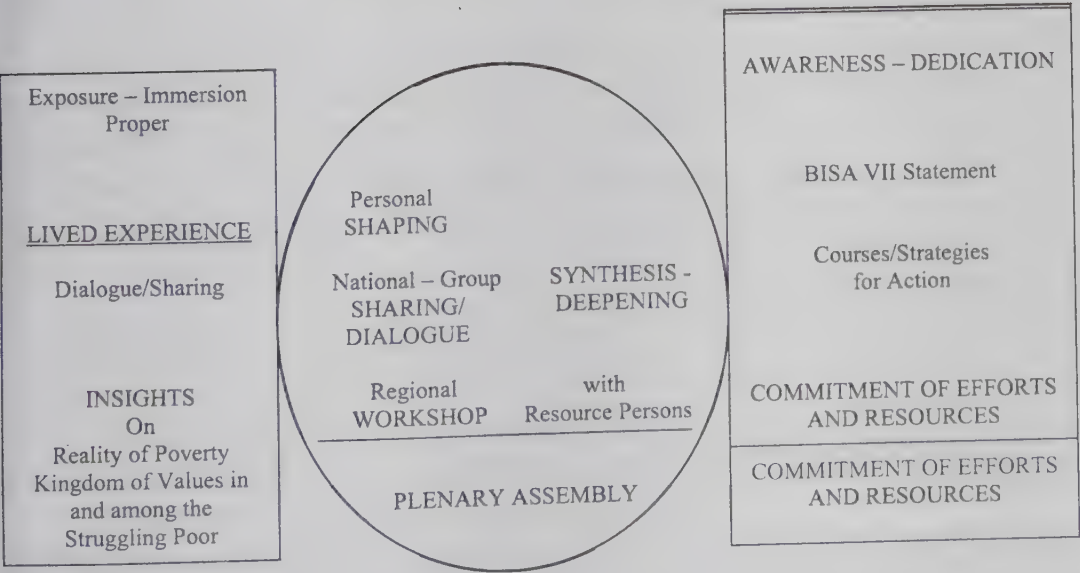
- ✱ orientation for justice and preferential option for the poor in the Asian Context
- ✱ dialogue with other religions and peoples committed to creating a new society; inculturation
- ✱ acknowledgement of the presence of the Lord of History working through human beings and the willingness to be partners and collaborators with God in shaping and re-shaping history.

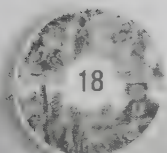


THE DYNAMICS OF BISA I – VI

INPUT	TRANSFORMATION PROCESS	OUTPUT
Information/Situationer	Assimilation	
Orientation		
Exposure	Through:	– growth in bishops
Reflections	– Dialogue/Reflection/ Analysis	Understanding of the causes of poverty and determination to identify with the poor,
Experiences of participants	– Workshops	– statements
Resource Persons Input	– Plenaries	– growth of collegiality
NEW INPUT		– evaluation of help for new input

THE DYNAMICS OF BISA VII





Final Reflections From BISA-VII

1. The Bishops' Institute for Social Action (BISA) VII at Hua Hin, Thailand, from 15-23 January 1986, continued the efforts of the Federation of Asian Bishops' Conferences (FABC) over the last twelve years, to become the Church of the Poor in Asia. It sought to understand and confront, in a *new* way, the obstacles and challenges to integral human development in Asia in the latter half of the 1980s. "Human development is a profound concept that translates sharply for our time the simple and fundamental command of the Gospel that we love one another." (BISA V)
2. BISA VII gathered together 68 participants, among whom 43 bishops, nine of whom were from non-Asian countries. The Asian bishops represented each of the twelve Bishops' Conferences of the Federation – Pakistan, India-Nepal, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Thailand, Malaysia-Singapore-Brunei, Indonesia, Philippines, Japan, Korea, Taiwan and Hong Kong. The non-Asian participants represented the Bishops' Conferences of Canada, U.S.A, Brazil, Australia, New Zealand, Ireland, South Africa and Germany, the Pontifical Commission of Justice and Peace, Caritas International and Misereor. Archbishop Dominic Tang of China was also present.

I. BISA VII in Perspective

3. The statements issued by the six BISAs manifest a progression in their understanding of the implications of becoming the Church of the Poor in Asia. BISAs I-III sought to interpret the social dimension of the Gospel in the context of Asia (BISA III). They faced the staggering extent of Asia's material poverty but emphasized that "our people are not poor as far as cultural traditions, human values and religious insights are concerned." (BISA I-III).
4. As witnesses to Christ, the Church must make a wholehearted commitment to the poor and opt in their favor. This does not mean merely to work for the poor, but with the poor. (BISA I). The first step in the process of working with the poor is to live in contact with and close to the weak, to the people in need (BISA II). However, many of our Church institutions designed to help the poor, not only do not do so, but may, in fact, have unintended effects against their interests. They are caught as it were, in the unjust social system and structure of our age. (BISA III).



BISA IV-VI stressed the collegial responsibility of bishops for human development.



While examining afresh the Asian situation in the light of the Gospel, the bishops sought to do this as brothers, in an effort to discover the practical meaning of collegiality of bishops. (BISA IV)

5. They indicated that since many of the problems of human development are structural in nature, they need to coordinate collegially their insights and initiatives at diocesan, national and regional levels. (BISA V) The methodology of BISAs IV-V emphasized, more than previous BISAs, exposure to the poor themselves. Thus the bishops came to see the causes of their distressing situation.
6. BISA VI asked, "Are there new challenges and increasing obstacles to human development in Asia in the 1980s?" The new challenges that aggravate the old challenges to human development are the increasing militarization of the continent, the militant resurgence of traditional religions in Asia and Asia's increased dependence on global economies.
7. In BISA VII the bishops attempted to discover a liberative spirituality for social action among the poor and by the poor. A new spirituality that will suffuse evangelization and embrace the plan of God for the whole creation is imperative. Mere individual salvation is not enough; salvation must be for the whole person, all people and even the cosmos. This spirituality must not be inward looking but must place the Church at the service of the whole human race. (BISA VI)

The Methodology of BISA VII: The Pastoral Cycle



8. To the usual BISA exposure program, BISA VII added a new dimension of *immersion*. Exposure brought us closer to the stark reality of poverty, but immersion sought to experience reality from the perspective of the poor themselves. Exposure is like a doctor's visit for diagnosis; immersion is like the visit of a genuine friend entering into a dialogue-of-life. Exposure-immersion which follows the basic principle of the Incarnation is the first stage of the pastoral cycle.
9. After *exposure-immersion* follows the second stage of *social analysis*. Using social analysis we try to evaluate the social, economic, political, cultural and religious systems in society. We try further to discern God's plan in the signs of the times,



in the voices of our age, in the events of history as well as in the needs and aspirations of our people. Nevertheless, social analysis is a tool, is unable to provide an adequate grasp of the whole of reality. This is due to the perennial possibility of our brokenness intervening, thus resulting in deception either by ideology or self-interest.

The Perennial Hope of the BISAs.....

14. In the past BISAs the bishops have voiced their hopes and expressed their commitment to supporting the formation of basic communities of people.
15. We also saw certain signs of hope. From our point of view the efforts of people to develop themselves and build their new communities are far more important than production figures. The growth of people and communities is the principal concern of the Church. (BISA IV)
16. Besides the growth of basic communities, the bishops indicate that another sign of hope is the growing cooperation among the religions of Asia. Religion, which once may have been used to sanction the status quo, is gradually coming to be a source of courage and vision toward needed social change. (BISA IV)
17. The same theme of hopeful dialogue with the Asian religions appears at the end of BISA.
18. We wish to facilitate a further dialogue with the great religions about the meaning of faith and service in daily life. All mankind is rooted in the Christ event; this anthropology is operative even in those who do not know Christ. Our main point of contact is the search for a new humanity and a new human family. (BISA V).

II. The Twofold Hope for the Future of BISA VII.....

The two fold hope of BISA VII is for a genuine thrust towards the people at the base that has already begun with the exposure-immersion programs of the bishops in their own countries. BISA VI presented a challenge based on faith.

- we must strive to become truly the Church of the Poor. (BISA V)
- The second hope for the future of BISA VII is the strengthening of the collegial bonds among bishops and bishops' conferences all

BISA-VIII: THE PROPHETIC JOURNEY CONTINUES!

Fr. Nithiya OFM. Cap Exc. Secretary, OHD-FABC
(nithiyas@gmail.com)



Introduction



One of the major Programmes initiated by the Office of Human Development (OHD) was the Bishops' Institute for Social Action (BISA) Series. All the BISAs are Gospel- oriented and theo-praxis in process. Historically, all the Bishops who came to attend the BISAs experienced not only to understand the struggles and sufferings of the poor people but also to pitch their tents amidst them and share their life in practical solidarity in their distressing situations. The prophetic pilgrimage of the Bishops of Asia to be with the poor and for the poor and to see the world by the eyes of the poor, continues after a gap of 25 years.

BISAs I – III sought to interpret the social dimension of the Gospel in the context of Asia. As witnesses to Christ, the Church must make a wholehearted commitment to the poor and opt in their favour. This does not mean merely to work for the poor, but to be with the poor as Jesus the poor.

BISA IV – VI stressed the collegial responsibility of bishops for human development. While examining the Asian situation in the light of the Gospel, the bishops sought to do this as brothers, in an effort to discover the practical meaning of collegiality of bishops. Since many of the problems of human development are structural in nature, the bishops need to coordinate collegially their insights and initiatives at diocesan, national and regional levels. All these programmes (BISA-I-VI) had exposures to different poor communities – slum dwellers, workers, farmers, etc.

BISA VII – added the new dimension of immersion. Exposure brought us closer to the stark reality of poverty, but immersion sought to experience reality from the perspective of the poor themselves. While exposure was like a doctor's visit for diagnosis, immersion led to genuine empathy through a lived-in experience of a genuine friend and family member. It is in BISA VII, that the methodology of the Pastoral Cycle came.

OHD is reviving the BISA programmes to help the Bishops with a special immersion amidst and exposure to the cry of the poor and the marginalised. This will also give an occasion for the Bishops ample opportunity to meet with other Bishops with their socio-pastoral concerns to enrich each other. The present BISA-VIII in November, 2011 will be for the Bishops through the re-reading of the Catholic Social Teachings in the light of the growing challenges and struggles of our society.

Special Focus of BISA VIII

1. The Theme of BISA-VIII will be **The Response of the Church to the struggles of the marginalised of Asia in the light of CST**
2. Six priority issues of Asia will be covered in the light of CST, namely: 1. Labour and Rights of labourers. 2. Migrants and their families 3. Indigenous Peoples 4. Women and Children 5. Conflicts and Peace Building 6. Eco-just Society
3. The strategy of each theme will include *a. Contextual analysis b. Theological and ethical vision based on the Gospel and CST c. Practical implications and Concrete proposals for future.*

Process and strategy

1. The Participants (Bishops, resource persons etc.) who are able to join, will undergo exposure-immersion in smaller groups individually distributed to pre-arranged areas of the poor and the marginalized – like Migrants, Indigenous Peoples etc. Time: from 18th Jan. till 21st Jan. Noon. 2012
2. From November 21th eve. to 24th Jan. 2012 – Inputs on various struggles of Asia and the Response of the Church in the light of CST. – Group discussions, deliberations, action plans on the socio-pastoral undertakings by the Conferences and Dioceses etc. that will be carried forward further in the parishes, BCCs BECs etc.
3. There will also be action plans on animation, coordination and dissemination of CST at various levels in the Church and outside, in collaboration with other Faith Based Communities, Governments, NGOs, etc. to serve the people effectively.

Participants

1. Bishops-in-charge of the following Commission of Episcopal Conferences:
 - ★ Justice and Peace
 - ★ Human Development (Caritas Offices/networks)
 - ★ Migrants and Refugees
 - ★ Indigenous Peoples
2. Representatives of the Episcopal Conferences of Asia
3. Resource Persons and Invited Guests especially from the Faith Based Organisations related to OHD

Programme

- Jan 17, 2012 – Arrival by evening (for those participating in the Immersion –exposure Programme)
- Jan 18-21, 2012 – Exposure Immersion
- Jan 21-24, 2012 – Response of the Church in Asia in the light of CST - sessions, workshops and action plans.
- Jan 25, 2012 – Departure

Venue for Exposure-Immersion and solidarity:

Outskirts of Bangkok, Pattaya and Rural Areas beyond Rachapuri in order to be with:

- ✿ the Indigenous Peoples,
- ✿ the Migrants,
- ✿ the victims of Human Trafficking
- ✿ the Victims of HIV/AIDS

Venue for the Sessions on CST in Asia:

Camilian Pastoral Centre, Bangkok, Thailand

Fr. Desmond De Souza,
Former Exe. Secretary, OHD



The Springboard of the BISA Program

The bishops returned from the first phase of their BISA VIII program: exposure-immersion. This phase Jan.18-20 is the springboard of the whole BISA program, it emphasizes its uniqueness, because the participants are brought face-to-face with the reality of different marginalized groups struggling for a human existence in the face of discrimination, exploitation and poverty.

For me, even after many years of experience of exposure-immersion, it remains challenging and exhilarating. The stark and brutal reality of life hits one in the face. There is nowhere to hide from it. One might feel uncomfortable, even revolted with the reality, but there is no escape. Like a sponge immersed in water, the reality envelopes you like the stink of decaying garbage. But that is the very purpose of the immersion dimension of this foundational phase.

Reality is the Best Teacher

In exposure, you can stand apart like a doctor diagnosing an illness, or a professor analyzing a social issue. But immersion is like a friend encountering another friend with such empathy that the experience forces the participant to change their usual way of looking at a person and try to '*see reality through the eyes of the other person*' who has now become a friend. This experience of confronting *reality as it is*, not filtered through a lecture or even a power-point presentation is capable of producing the '*metanoia*' (Gospel word for a radical conversion) that is life-changing. The stark reality, the experience of encounter with a person(s) from a marginalized group as a friend encountering a friend, initiates a

new perspective, forces a new way of looking and understanding the reality, as it were '*from within*', not from outside.

Immersion Into the World of the Victims of Tourism



My group of bishops were guided through the world of the victims of tourism. Pattaya beach was an R&R (Rest and Recreation) centre for United States military personnel during the Vietnam war (1965-75). Young girls mainly in the age group 16-25 swarmed like bees in search of the elusive US dollar that made all the difference between starvation and survival for their families back home. Hospitality and care for their parents and younger siblings were values that reinforced their aspirations for a better life for them and their families. Whatever the price, they were ready to pay it without any tears.

When the war ended, tourism became a new form of colonization of Pattaya. The new colonizers now included elderly and retired *farangs*(*foreigners*) and the colonized are increasing numbers of young girls coming even from neighboring Laos, Cambodia, Myanmar and as far as Yunan Province in China. As we walked the streets with our two Thai guides, we were literally suffocated by hoards of farangs USA, Germany, England and now coming even from Russia, Turkey and eastern Europe. The garish beer pubs and bars are overflowing with eager young girls ever ready to please a customer..for a price!

Sauntering down the promenade we encountered droves of girls, skimpily-clad, gaudily painted '*loners*', knowing very English, but more than enough to strike a deal of sex for money! Our guides then took us through the '*males only*' quarter.

We were glad to return near midnight to our normal world at the Redemptorist Centre after what can be considered by us, a foreign land of sex tourism, with its exploiters and exploited, its colonizers and colonized.

During the next two days at the Fountain of Life Centre run by the Good Shepherd sisters, we were '*educated*' on their response as local Church, to more than 2500 girls a year who are willing, but nevertheless victims, in the world of global tourism. The

girls come during the day to the Centre where they are trained in professional skills like tailoring, hair-dressing, massage and language skills of English, German and Thai (for the non-Thai girls), physical, psychological, intellectual and spiritual education - all that empowers them in their often live-in relationships with farang partners.

Talking to the girls in the 'safe environs' at the Centre, we realize they are '*willing victims*:' '*victims*' because they come from the poorest areas along the Thai/Cambodia/Laos/Myanmar border. They come willingly, often to earn money for their impoverished families back home, sometimes to escape dysfunctional and abusive family life, sometimes deceived by traffickers.

Somewhere beyond their pretty smiling faces, as they narrated their heart-rending aspirations for a better life for themselves and their families, the bishops heard a faint but clear voice challenge them. "Whatever you do for these least of my sisters, you do that unto me."

Positive signs in the contemporary world are the growing awareness of the solidarity of the poor among themselves, their efforts to support one another, and their public demonstrations on the social scene which, without recourse to violence, present their own needs and rights in the face of the inefficiency or corruption of public authorities. By virtue of her own evangelical duty the Church feels called to take her stand beside the poor, to discern the justice of their requests, and to help satisfy them, without losing sight of the good of groups in the context of the common good.

—Sollicitudo Rei Socialis, 39

SPIRIT OF BISA: CHURCH OF ASIA - CHURCH OF THE POOR

Fr. Bonnie Mendes

Former Exec. Secretary, OHD-FABC



Let me share with you what some former outstanding BISA Bishop participants shared with me. This is the right time to keep their ideas alive as OHD of FABC is having its BISA program after a break of over 25 years.

But before I do that, let me affirm the methodology of BISAs, it is very special and very different from all other programs that we are used to. It came in the background of the end of Vatican II and all the changes that the Council had stimulated followed very soon in 1967 by the historic encyclical *Populorum Progressio* of Pope Paul VI.

Then within years came the visit of Pope Paul VI to Manila Philippines at the end of November 1970. More than 150 Asian Bishops took part, OHD had the unique responsibility to take forward the dynamic thinking that emerged during the event. As the Federation laws and bye laws were drafted, OHD launched its first BISA in Novaliches, Philippines, in 1974. It began with an exposure program. The process beginning with the poor becoming the teachers. They explained to the Bishops how they see life today and the Bishops became listeners.

The first three BISAs all were on the Social teachings of the Church, seeing things from the perspective of the poor. This inductive process beginning with the exposure program, and then reflections and understanding what Jesus Christ, speaking through the poor, wanted to tell the Bishops.

Bishop Labayen often told the story that when he went for the *Ad Limina* visit, he got the opportunity one to one talking to Paul VI, he spoke about the BISAs and how the program had inverted the whole process of reflections, beginning with learning from the Poor. Pope Paul VI told him, "I wish I could have such an opportunity of having an exposure program and the opportunity of learning from the Poor."

The next three BISAs, from 1979 to 1986 were on Collegiality. The process went forward and although Asian Bishops were in the

majority but there were Bishops from other continents as well. The program moved from exposure to immersion and the Bishops using the inductive method more and more and growing in the process.

Now to Bishops who made it a point to insist when I was Executive Secretary of OHD/FABC. All of them were Chairman of PHD/FABC Bishop Labayan, Bishop Bunluen Mansap, Cardinal Stephen Hamao and Archbishop Soter Fernandez:

They said something to this effect, "Do not give up having programs for the Bishops. They need them to get updated on the Catholic Social Teachings. The best people to update are the Poor themselves, hence follow the inductive method, let the Poor speak to them." For it means taking the unfamiliar course of looking for guidelines of police and action not to ready-made theological, legal and sociological systems developed principal in the west but to discernment of a historical process taking place among our own people". Desmond de Souza CSsR 'The Concerned Face of the Church' Page 487.

Bishop Aloysius Soma was a Japanese Bishop who openly said that his conversion his Metanoia came from the exposure program. His visit to the poor and listening to them created an awareness on him and he started looking at all Catholic Social Teachings from a new perspective, the perspective of the poor.

Bishop Leo Nannayakara of Badulla diocese, Sri Lanka, is another who spoke to me in Sri Lanka while we were preparing for BISA VI. He said that the BISA program was vital to give the Bishops a broad vision. A Bishop is not only a Bishop of his diocese but he is a Bishop of the Universal Church. BISA V said, "If the Church is to respond to the challenge of the 1980s it cannot content itself with being a body which simply reacts to the initiatives of others. It will need a positive vision and the will to harness the means to achieve it." Desmond de Souza CSsR, 'The Concerned Face of the Church', Pg 500

I met Bishop Joachim Rozario of Chittagong diocese, Bangladesh, at St Peter's square in the Vatican in 1982. He was dressed in his familiar Pajama and shirt made of woven cloth. "He immediately spoke about BISAs and his learning that there cannot be two kings in one kingdom, hence I realized he said, there can only one king so a bishop has to be a servant of servants". Cardinal Kim asked the question, "Is the role in Church to build up its own kingdom, or to die in building up God's kingdom? Desmond de Souza CSsR The Concerned Face of the Church Page 9.

SPIRIT OF BISA: Church of Asia – Church of the poor

Cardinal Kim of Seoul Archdiocese, South Korea, was the Resource person at BISA VI in Kandy, Sri Lanka. During his visit he shared a small group the need of being very particular about the timing of make statements in favour of the workers. He said it was not about coming up strong on human rights violations, but being very particular where one spoke up and what kind of preparations were made before making the statement on human rights. The right forum, the right atmosphere, the timing, the right media were essential if not the human rights statement makes no impact.

The Asian Bishops at the first General Assembly of Federation of Asian Bishops' Conferences in Taipei, Taiwan, in 1974 said, "It is our resolve, first of all, to be more truly 'The Church of the Poor'. They said, " If we are to place ourselves at the side of the multitudes in our continent, we must in our way of life share something of their poverty. The Church cannot set up island of affluence in a sea of want and misery; our own personal lives must give witness to evangelical simplicity, no man how lowly or poor, should find it hard to come to us, and find in us their brothers.

"We resolve to have the courage to speak up for the rights of disadvantaged and powerless, against all forms of injustice no matter from what source such abuse may come." Fr Bonnie Mendes, *'Being Church of the Poor: An Organizational & Planning Paradigm'*

Bishop Julio Labayen, of the Prelature of Infants, Philippines, true to his Carmelite Spirituality stressed the need of contemplation in the drive to make the Social Teachings of the Church alive in the global world of today. He stressed the process of Action Contemplation Action. This regular need of each of the components Action and Contemplation are extremely important and the BISA Immersion program of 1986 tried its best to stress this importance of Action and Contemplation.

To Reflect and to Respond

1. In what ways are you conscious of those who are economically poor or disadvantaged?
2. What are some very concrete ways that you can make a preferential option for the poor?
3. How are we collectively responsible for the conditions of poverty both locally and globally?
4. What can you do both directly and indirectly to work for change?

"CHURCH OF THE POOR"

Most Rev. Bishop Pibul

From the homily given at the inaugural mass of BISA-VIII



I. Good news to all

The Church is still loyal to her mission to proclaim the Good News to all, especially to the poor. *Church of the Poor* was first used by Pope John XXIII in Vatican Council in 1962; picked up by Asian Bishops at their historic first meeting in Manila in 1970. It became the core message of the Second Plenary Council of the Philippines (PCP II) in 1991.

The *Church of the Poor* is an identity of the whole mystical Body of Christ. John Paul II says that "the Church is firmly committed to their cause, for she considers it her mission, her service, a proof of her fidelity to Christ, so that she can be the 'Church of the Poor.'"

II. Church of the Poor

It is a result of contemplation on the very mission of Christ himself. Her name is changed from the Christendom Church to the Church of the Poor, for a specific task that implies, even demands from the Christendom model of Church, a conversion to the Jesus of the Gospel. Only in this manner can the church present herself as the Church for all people (universal) and above all, as the Church of the Poor.

- ❖ **First** and foremost, it is a call to a **deeper practice of Christian living**. The Church of the poor is called to witness to Jesus of Nazareth, who "for your sake he made himself poor though he was rich, so that you might become rich by his poverty." Just as Christ carried out the work of redemption in poverty and oppression, so the Church is called to follow the same path if she is to communicate the fruits of salvation to men.
- ❖ **Secondly**, it is an invitation to **read the signs of the times**. For it is He who causes people to discern the signs of the times, signs willed by God puts to us within history. Since the Church lives in history, she ought to "scrutinize the signs of the times



and interpret them in the light of the Gospel. "to read the signs of the times, specific ways in which God is speaking to today's world and calling people to respond" All these can be read in the context of the Church of the Poor in her historical context

- ✱ **Thirdly**, it is a **duty** to carry the mission to bring the gospel message to the ends of the world. To be in solidarity with the poor is a real and deep obligation of all Christians and of the Church of the Poor. It is a duty to give to the poor out of that which remains. The commandment to love the neighbor invites everyone to consider the poor and marginalized of other nations as true brothers and sisters who share in the one table of life intended by God for the enjoyment of all.
- ✱ **Fourthly**, it is a call to responsibility. God gives everyone the task to put forward the gospel values such as charity, solidarity, peace, love, compassion, generosity, forgiveness, and concern to all. But this task is particularly addressed to those who have the capacity to help others in need especially those experiencing abandonment, rejection, neglect, and are disregarded in the community.

III. Theological Foundation



The human person is the clearest reflection of God's presence in the world; all of the Church's work in pursuit of both justice and peace is designed to protect and promote the dignity of every person. For each person not only reflects God, but is the expression of God's creative work and the meaning of Christ's redemptive ministry.

God always protects those who are weak and suffering, the poor and abandoned. He has a special attention to them. He is the first one who cares for the option for the poor is something that concerns God. God is the first who opt for the poor and it is only a consequence of this that the Church too has to opt for the poor.

As followers of Christ, we are challenged to make a fundamental 'option for the poor' to speak for the voiceless, to defend the defenseless, to assess life styles, policies, and social institutions in terms of their impact on the poor. This 'option for the poor' does not mean putting one group against another, but rather, strengthening the whole community by assisting those who are the most vulnerable. The greatest needs require the greatest response.

"God entrusts us to one another. Our freedom has a relational dimension; we find our fulfillment through the gift of self to others." It is not just a responsibility of a few people. It is a universal concern.



Church calls on all, especially the poor, the oppressed and the afflicted, to cooperate with God to bring about liberation from every sin and to build a world which will reach the fullness of creation only when it becomes the work of people for people.

IV. Option for the Poor



The "option for the poor," is not an adversarial slogan that puts one group or class against another. Rather it states that the deprivation and powerlessness of the poor wounds the whole community. Pope John Paul II says, this preference has to be expressed in worldwide dimensions, embracing the immense numbers of the hungry, the needy, the homeless, those without medical care, and those without hope.

The option for the poor is an essential part of society's effort to achieve the common good. A healthy community can be achieved only if its members give special attention to those with special needs, to those who are poor and on the margins of society.

This preferential option for the poor can already be seen in the history of the Church.

This reality could be given bases from the Old Testament. Yahweh cares for the poor, especially the orphans and widows. This concern of Yahweh became part of Jesus mission. "His entire life was a testimony of this love of preference for the poor." He dedicated his whole life for all and for the poor. This is the same call that Jesus invites everyone to, a dedication of one's life for others.

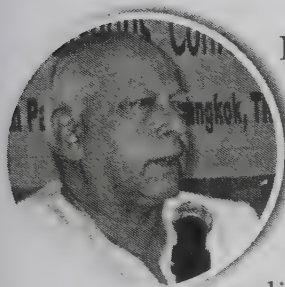
To opt for the poor is a consequence of one's following the footsteps of Christ even to the most difficult of times. This same mission and call had been specifically addressed by the Holy Father in his encyclical letter. Knowing the condition of the people of Asia, he invites "the Church in Asia then, with its multitude of poor and oppressed people, is called to live a communion of life which shows itself particularly in loving service to the poor and defenseless." It is a noble mission of Asian Christians to propagate the same concern for the poor and needy. In fact, "in seeking," he continues, "to promote human dignity, the Church shows a preferential love for the poor and the voiceless, because the Lord has identified himself with them in a special way."

(Ref: Taken from Silliman University)

RESPONSE OF THE CHURCH IN ASIA TO THE CONCERNS OF WORKERS IN THE LIGHT OF CATHOLIC SOCIAL TEACHING

Fr. Desmond de Sousa CSsR

Former Exec. Secretary, OHD



It was Pope John XXIII who also internationalized the phrase, "*The Church of the Poor*." His visit to Assisi, the town of the poverello just prior to the opening of the Council, he understood the close connection between the Council and the theme of poverty. He informed the world in his radio message on the eve of the Council, about how the Church was to present herself to the world. He stated, "*In dealing with the underdeveloped countries, the Church presents herself as she is and as she wants to be – as a Church for all men and especially the Church of the Poor. In the inaugural address to the Council, he reiterated, '{The Council} ought to contribute to the diffusion of the social and communitarian content which is inherent in authentic Christianity in its entirety: only in this manner can the Church present herself as the Church of all peoples (universal) and above all, as the Church of the Poor.'*"

This model of the Church of the Poor was taken up at the first Asian Bishops Meeting (1970), presided over by Pope Paul VI, which declared, "*...the face of Asia, continent of teeming masses...a face largely marked with poverty, with undernourishment and ill-health, scarred by war and suffering, troubled and restless... It is our resolve, first of all, to be more truly the CHURCH OF THE POOR. If we are to place ourselves at the side of the multitudes in our continent, we must in our way of life share something of their poverty. The Church cannot set up islands of affluence in a sea of want and misery...*" This was the challenge of God to the Churches of Asia because almost two-thirds of the world's population resides in Asia and the majority of these people are poor. The Churches of Asia cannot become islands of affluence in the midst of a sea of misery and poverty.

The Asian bishops gradually became more precise about the specific kinds of poverty that characterizes Asia. The vast majority of the people of Asia, they felt, are poor materially, but are rich culturally because of their ancient religio-cultural heritage. Fr. Aloysius Pieris, the Sri Lankan theologian explains that there is a poverty that is imposed on people by the oppressive social system – the systemic impoverishment of the masses; but there is also

a poverty that is voluntary, expressed in a simple life-style that is in solidarity with the victims of impoverishment. It combines detachment from material possessions with trust and hope in the Saviour as the only source of salvation. He concludes that within the Asian ethos the two characteristic values of Asia – religiosity and poverty – actually coalesce in Asian identity, so that a deeply religious person must voluntarily be truly a poor person. The challenge to the Church in the Third World is to become more and more, the Church of the Poor.

From Bishops Institute for Social Action (BISA) to Asian Institute for Social Action (AISA) to Faith Encounters in Social Action (FEISA)

OHD/FABC organized BISAVII in Thailand on "Asia's religious-cultural heritage and human development." (1987). *BISA VII added the new dimension of immersion to the exposure part of the programme.* Exposure brought us closer to the stark reality of poverty, but immersion sought to experience reality from the perspective of the poor themselves. While exposure was like a doctor's visit for diagnosis, immersion led to genuine empathy through a lived-in experience of a genuine friend and family member.

In the follow-up meeting we crystallized the Pastoral Spiral method of four stages: (I) *Exposure-Immersion* into the problem at grassroots level by living among the poor people (II) *Social Analysis* of understanding the antiquated personal and unjust social structures that perpetuated their situation (III) *Theological (Faith) Reflection* of discovering the challenge of God working within the human situation and responding with faith conviction to the situation (IV) *Pastoral Planning* WITH, not FOR the people, in actually responding to the situation of injustice that caused their poverty.

AISA (Asian Institute for Social Action)

The bishops now had *a method of helping the diocese move towards becoming the Church of the Poor.* The AISA was to bring the method down to the level of a diocese. The diocese has to be "converted" – make a radical change in our minds, hearts and



life-style – TO the *“poor not as a burden, but as a resource, even from an economic point of view”* (Pope Benedict XVI, *Charity in Truth*, 2009 n.35). Somewhere among the poor are the resource person(s) we need, to teach us how to live today in a world where “there is more than enough resources for our needs, but not for our greed” (Mahatma Gandhi)

- ✧ Our programs FOR THE POOR, can become an obstacle to the human relationship with the poor that is fundamental to our catholic identity. Otherwise we only provide services to the poor like the government agencies.
- ✧ There must be a gradual leveling process, like osmosis – a giving and receiving, unlearning and relearning – so that both persons in the human relationship *develop together, otherwise no human development has occurred.*
- ✧ The ideal is an incarnational process which gradually enables us to see reality through the eyes of the poor, because God sees reality that way and faith means to see reality through God’s eyes. This is the struggle that the life of faith demands.

FEISA (Faith Encounters in Social Action).....

The Church in Asia has to become *“the Church of the Poor,”* - enunciated by both Popes John XXIII (1962), Paul VI(1970) – while learning from the rich religio-cultural experience of people of other faiths. It demands being converted BY the poor through a genuine human relationship of respect, justice and equity

AISA I: Becoming the Church of the Poor with Urban Workers

(Antipolo diocese, Philippines Aug 28- Sept 5, 1987)

In BISA VII the bishops attempted to discover a liberative spirituality for social action among the poor and by the poor.

“A new spirituality that will suffuse evangelization and embrace the plan of God for the whole creation is imperative. Mere individual salvation is not enough; salvation must be for the whole person, all the people and even the cosmos. This spirituality must not be inward looking but must place the Church at the service of the whole human race.”(BISA VI, Sri Lanka, 1982)

This hope for transformation of the diocese and the spiritual orientation of the diocesan pastoral policy of social action was a concern of the AISA series. An off-shoot of BISA VII, the AISA series aimed to provide each national bishops conference of the FABC with *an opportunity and a method* which will be a genuine contribution to the centenary celebration of Pope Leo XIII's epoch making encyclical *Rerum Novarum* (1891). At the centenary celebrations the bishops were to ask themselves "How have we implemented the Social Teachings of the Church?"

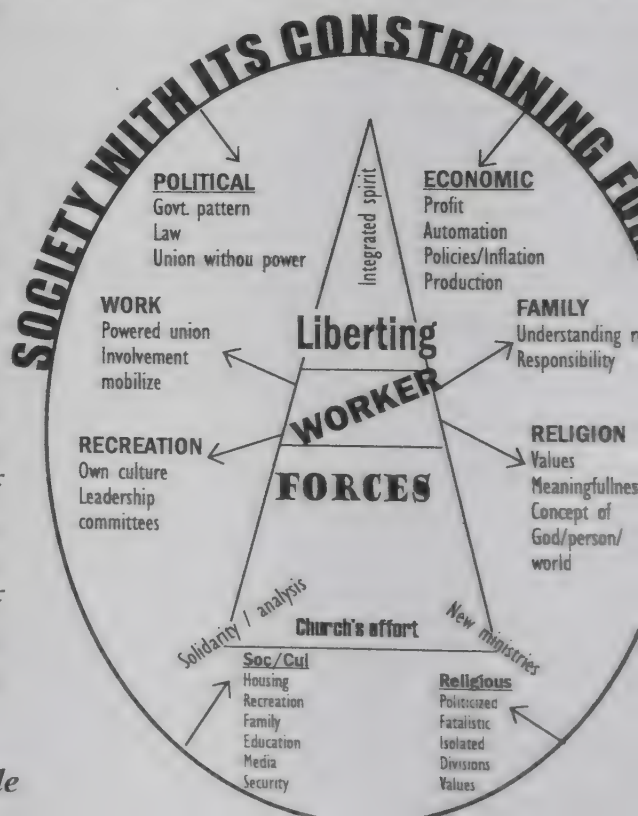
The more specific aims of each AISA were: to plan the concrete steps necessary at diocesan, national and Asian level to make the Church of Asia the Church of the Poor with special reference to particular sectors of poor: laborers (AISA I, Antipolo, Philippines, 1987), migrants (AISA II, Macao, 1988), slum-dwellers (AISA III, Seoul, Korea, 1988), victims of tourism (AISA IV, 1989, Ubon, Thailand), fishermen, farmers, women workers etc.

Catholic Social Teaching: The Gospel of Life for Labor and Laborers (Pope John Paul II, 1995)

"THE GOSPEL OF LIFE is at the heart of Jesus' message. Lovingly received day after day by the Church, it is to be preached with dauntless fidelity as "good news" to the people of every age and culture....

When he presents the heart of his redemptive mission, Jesus says: "I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly" (Jn 10:10). In truth, he is referring to that "new" and "eternal" life which consists in communion with the Father, to which every person is freely called in the Son by the power of the Sanctifying Spirit. It is precisely in this "life" that all the aspects and stages of human life achieve their full significance". (Introduction to the Gospel of life)

See diagram on the right side





An epoch-making phase of transition.....

The phenomenon of globalization is one of the most important causes of the current change in the organization of work. This phenomenon brings about new forms of production where plants are located away from where strategies are decided and far from the markets where the goods are consumed. There are two primary factors driving this phenomenon: the extraordinary speed of communication no longer limited by space or time, and the relative ease with which merchandise and people are transported from one part of the world to another. This entails a fundamental consequence for processes of production, as property is ever further removed and often indifferent to the social effects of the decisions made. On the other hand, if it is true that globalization is neither good nor bad in itself, but depends on how it is used, it must be affirmed that a globalization of safeguards, minimum essential rights and equity is necessary. (Compendium of Catholic Social Doctrine n.310)

A New Way of Being Church in the World of Work

"Human work is a key, probably an essential key, to the whole social question" (Pope John Paul II's encyclical On Human Work, 1981). The Social encyclicals of the Popes over more than 100 years have emphasized that disorder in the work relationships is the basic cause of the widespread injustices in the world today.

For work to become more human i.e. more according to God's plan, certain human rights must be implemented in the world of work:

- 1. The right to work in order to support oneself and ones family*
- 2. The right to medical assistance and health care, esp. in case of accidents at work.*
- 3. The right to rest at least one day in the week and a vacation during the year.*
- 4. The right to healthy physical and moral environment*

The new way of being Church has to reach out to those most vulnerable sections of the world of work which are denied these basic human rights that relate to the person of the worker as well as his/her family. This demands that priests, religious and laity – to the extent that they are able – need to be trained to enter into the world of work and participate with others in

the process of transformation of the world of work, so that it is gradually humanized and becomes more in keeping with God's plan.

Three sectors of the world of work need to be addressed according to the following priority:

- A. Unorganized labour, consisting of mostly illiterate and semi skilled migrants. They do the dehumanizing, dangerous and dirty work, because they have to survive on daily wages. Women and children are the most vulnerable of this sector.*
- B. Unemployed or underemployed, consisting of school drop-outs in towns and cities, and underemployed in villages.*
- C. Organized sector, which is rapidly shrinking under the impact of globalization due to increasing retrenchment and Voluntary Retirement Scheme. There is increasing job insecurity even in this sector.*

Plan of Action

- A. First, shorter ten day training courses in four dioceses for about twenty young priests, seminarians, male and female religious and laity to initiate them into a new way of being Church in the world of work.*
- B. Second, longer one month training courses to train full-timers who will operate the diocesan labour desk as a sign of the Church's concern for workers in the world of work.*

Follow-Up Actions

- 1. TIME:** The bishop with his team or members of the Diocesan Pastoral Council should keep up-to-date with the world of the workers
 - ★ spend time with the workers educating them in Catholic Social doctrine and Teachings on Work, listening to their problems as workers and having a regular liaison between the bishop and workers
 - ★ regarding the May Day Message, the feast Day of St Joseph the Worker and other occasions,
 - ★ especially when a strike is on to find out the situation and the condition of the workers and their families at the parish/diocesan level.
 - ★ To ensure that Church workers are properly paid and have favorable working conditions according to Catholic social Teaching



2. **TALENT:** The diocese should set up a team maybe with some retired workers and managers as a labor commission or at least a workers desk, networking the parishes within the diocese The workers apostolate should be FOR workers and BY workers
 - ★ to do basic research on the available job situation of the workers, leadership training and advocacy to try and put into practice the Social Teachings
 - ★ to facilitate their organization into a workers movement along the lines of the Young Christian Workers (YCW) or Christian Workers Movement (CWM) following the Review of Life method or a workers association or an independent workers union of different categories of workers
 - ★ negotiating just solutions to workers grievances within Church institutions while educating Church personnel both employers and employees about Catholic Social Doctrine and Teaching
3. **TREASURE:** Church authorities allocate funds for catechists training, youth animators training, but not for training workers in their rights and duties as Christian workers. Workers themselves will contribute to efforts by the Church to genuinely serve them
 - ★ making Church premises available to workers for regular meetings and training
 - ★ encouraging priests and nuns to consider their parishioners as workers and to organize support service to workers families especially during times of strikes and demonstrations

“In protecting the rights of private individuals...special consideration must be given to the weak and the poor. For the nation, as it were, of the rich, is guarded by its own defenses and is in less need of governmental protection...”

—Pope Leo XIII, *On the Condition of Workers (Rerum Novarum)*, no 54

Johan Ketelers

*Secretary General of the International Catholic Migration
Commission (ICMC)*



Your Eminence, Excellencies, Monsignors, Reverend fathers and sisters, dear colleagues; allow me to first of all express gratitude for this opportunity to exchange with you on what has already proved to be a major global challenge for organized societies and humanity. Migration is indeed an epoch making issue affecting all societies and nations in their organisational structures, their economies and societal cohesion. The Church, because of its very grassroots level presence and its mission to accompany humanity is not only an important actor in these processes but a major guide to help societies and communities in establishing a culture of open-mindedness and respect for human dignity towards migrants. The International Catholic Migration Commission which celebrated its 60th anniversary of commitment to migrants last year is a major Church actor in this field and I'm pleased to share with you some ideas for further reflection, action and intensified collaboration.

The world faces two fundamental challenges today: the challenge of global resources and the challenge of global mobility.

Both challenges call for justice and equity as much as for management and order. The responsive processes for these challenges and the quality of their interconnection will determine the future of human societies. It indeed takes a healthy mixture of moral responsibility and orderly systems and procedures to guarantee a societal future offering dignity and freedom to every human person. Nor will any attempt to consider the future solely from a material or economic focused viewpoint deliver sufficiently adequate answers. The social teachings remind us that "The necessary distinction between morality and the economy does not entail the separation of these two spheres but, on the contrary, an important reciprocity"¹

¹ Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church – 331

Migration reveals many aspects of our human nature and is an indicator for our levels of understanding and integrating the Christian message. What we often witness is how much the concepts of belonging to one or another nation, group, instance or identity, continue to be stumbling blocks in the process of integration and recognition of my neighbour and brother or sister. The Biblical question "Who is my brother?" reveals to be of even greater urgency to be responded to when it comes to migrants. Human solidarity and ethical reflection indeed still need to be given a more predominant place in further shaping our world and migration is just another, yet very strong and compelling invitation to walk this road.

This understanding defines renewed levels of responsibility and new concepts in any national and international organizational approach. It is therefore useful to get a clear picture of facts and possible response mechanisms but equally important is the perspective from which this is done: without ignoring or denying what has been positive in the building of our societies, today's challenges invite us to look at broader panorama in a perspective related to human destiny. Taking part in the many societal processes - as yeast in the dough - is part of the Christian identity and mission. The Church's essential role in this is to accompany mankind in these processes and its responsibility is therefore linked to all daily processes that lead to every person's integral fulfilment. This calls for a theological dimension² as defined in *Centesimus Annus*, but, if I am allowed to add three more elements, for clear analysis, for courage and for discernment in action.

This presentation intends to shortly focus on some factual indicators highlighting the importance of human mobility and then to highlight some of the important challenges for which the Church, in the light of Catholic Social teachings faces broadened responsibilities.

1. Factual indicators (often used as single coated realities and therefore generating fear)

1.1 The numbers in human mobility are increasing.....

There are today some 214 million international migrants which, while relatively stable as a proportion of the total world population is a net increase of about 12% compared to the 2005 figures (191 million). United Nations Development Program (UNDP) estimates that there

² *Centesimus Annus*, 55



are also around 740 million internal migrants in the world, almost 4 times as many as those who have moved internationally. This figure may still be reviewed pending the definition of internal migration but it sufficiently indicates that in discussing human mobility we also need to consider the country internal mobility of people crossing ethnic, cultural and language frontiers, not to mention the wider scope of issues related to leaving a past and building another future. *Paradoxically it could be said that migration is therefore not only a divider but also a connector.* In this, human mobility is an icon on our global society screens and a driver of many more globalization phenomena. Though it is repeatedly heard that migration is here to stay, this mobility is very often presented as a single coated fact ignoring major sociologic dimensions and future perspectives for humanity. It is obvious that human mobility and its monitoring or management belongs to the preamble conditions of the world's future communities, societies and nations and therefore also of human existence.

1.2 The global population increase

A second important factual indicator for the present and future impact of human mobility on the world's societies is the rapid increase of the global population: some 35 years ago the global population was around 3 billion, In December 2011 we were already 7 billion and we will be an estimated 9 billion in 2050. If the same migration percentage is applied to the projected population growth, there will be some 300 million international migrants and some 1.5 billion internal migrants. These figures may even prove to be higher because of the growing need for mobility provoked by severe imbalances in demographics and in the distribution of the global resources. It should also be noted here that for the first time in history, 50% of the global population lives in urban areas, often marked by growing poverty. If it has already been pointed out that people left rural areas for reasons related to poverty and lack of opportunities, future international mobility is only likely to further increase on the very same grounds. It may even be said that rural migration is only a first step before moving internationally especially when poverty contuse to grow and city infrastructures will prove to be inadequate to respond to this explosive growth.

1.3 The economic crisis

A third indicator is the present status of our economy which has become utterly unpredictable. History has shown how much even massive migration flows have been triggered by economic situations. There are sufficient recent examples of this fact which determines e.g. the

correlation between the levels of unemployment and nationals believing that immigration levels are too high or the impact of remittances which have made many families become dependent on jobs in foreign countries. We may have come to better understand these financial transfers in their volumes, their origin and their destinations, but there is urgent need for further study on the effects of these remittances on families and communities. It is all too clear that these remittances generate new kinds of fragilities and international dependence. Such dependence mirrors how global economic processes are marked by the growing interdependence of states and communities worldwide, as demonstrated during the economic crisis of past year. In many ways, individuals and families are affected and their response mechanisms to family poverty add up to the broader economic chain reactions.

This is no doubt also the case for Asia which knows a rapid economic growth but which also numbers the highest migration flows, internally, regionally and globally. Bangladesh, China, India, Pakistan and of course the Philippines are the five Asian countries in the top 10 emigration countries. In countries like the Philippines, migration has become a major source of national income and so much is done at legal and governmental levels to facilitate migration; in Malaysia e.g. huge numbers of labourers are wanted in the construction area while every now and then forcibly returned; and in Thailand thousands of refugees live in camps which in fact have become new villages. Important for the Church is the fact that all this modifies the general picture of both community life and the human person as part of at least two if not many more communities.

1.4 Environmental issues

A fourth factual indicator may well be the disastrous impact of environmental events which has affected millions in 2010 in Asia only: Bangladesh and Indonesia are no doubt major risk countries but India, Myanmar, Pakistan, Philippines and Sri Lanka were severely hit by extreme weather events in 2010 affecting some 250 million people (IRIN 2010). These events have two effects on human mobility: they force people to leave and start life somewhere else and they contribute to the understanding that there is a possibility of starting life somewhere else.

These four factual indicators may be sufficient to invite us to consider three immediate responsibilities:

- ✱ Facts need to be given the necessary study and analysis;
- ✱ Existing societal structures and communities need to be adapted to integrate regional and global mobility
- ✱ The existing levels of protection need to be extended to serve all migrants.

**Labour migration**

Catholic Social Teaching, the many documents and encyclicals starting with *Exsul familia* offer so many incentives and guidance to develop a practical approach in the migration issue putting emphasis on rights and obligations and more deeply on elements of profound transformation and better understanding of our destination. I'm not here to repeat all of these highly useful guiding principles but allow me to add one more issue that I consider to be of the essence in fulfilling our role as Church in a globalizing world. The Compendium states in n° 310 that "the phenomenon of globalization is one of the most important causes of the current change in the organization of work. This phenomenon brings about new forms of production where plants are located far away from where strategies are decided and far from markets where the goods are consumed" This is about global mobility of production processes and consumption realities. Whereas geographies and national identities may seem to be dividing the world, economies and market relations are bringing it to another unity. What seems important for the Church is that people, workers find their just place in this changing reality.

Since it is obvious that the search for work is one of the main drivers in migration, why would labour then not be recognized as part of the solution levels? Catholic Social Teachings make it explicit: "The presentscenarios of profound transformation of human work call even more urgently for an authentically global development in solidarity that is capable of involving every region of the world including those less advantaged."³ This is not simply about redistribution of wealth or about the better understanding of the common good; this is about offering a correct perspective of the human person in the labour process. "Economic and social imbalances in the world must be addressed by restoring a just hierarchy of values and placing the human dignity of workers before all else"

Economy is indeed to serve the person, not the person to serve economy. This explains the importance the ICMC has given to this area of international advocacy. In promoting adequate protection for migrant workers ICMC clearly aims to contribute to global unity. "There is an even greater need for a careful consideration of the new situation of work in the present day context of globalization,

.....
³ Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church 321

in a perspective that values people's natural tendency to establish relationships⁴⁷ whereby the full focus is put on the dimension of universality "to be of human beings and not of things" and invites to build a global labour market to be "giving expression to a humanism of work on a planetary scale" and "to solidarity in the world of work" What is very inviting is the perspective that work, organized in proper ways, will contribute to peoples understanding of their one, shared vocation. This is indeed about cohesion and unity as opposed to whatever separates people.

Labour was also the overarching theme during the past Global Forum on Migration and Development: "*most of the challenges related to migration and development continue to arise in the context of labour mobility*"⁵ or the lack thereof. Labour migration and its link to development and the protection of migrant workers and their families have therefore been put at the centre of last year's GFMD civil society program in which following major themes were identified.

- rights based policy making for the benefit of migrant workers and families;
- Improving protection of migrants moving or working in irregular circumstances;
- Re-imagining labour mobility
- Investing in development of alternatives to migration

2. Responsibilities of Churches and Christians in the field of migration

Responsibilities emanate from our understanding of the Gospel. One could e.g. recall how much the parable of the Samaritan is a clear invitation to act as brothers and sisters, far beyond any kind of distinctions, group belonging, nationality, and conviction and even of faith. In our world marked by so many divisions, this indeed remains a challenging invitation but also a respected 'brand' for the Catholic identity,

Catholic Social Teaching is filled with immediate and indirect references to this "epoch making reality" simply because it continuously focuses on the human person, on his/her dignity in relation to God. Exsul Familia Nazarethana pictured the Holy Family of Nazareth as "the archetype of every refugee family; Mater

⁴⁷ Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church 3:2

⁵ States' GFMD 2011 Concept Paper

Magister, *Gaudium et Spes* and *Populorum Progressio* very closely looked at improving human conditions whereby *Gaudium et Spes* defines development as “the transition from less humane conditions to those which are more humane”. In essence these transitions are nothing else but people or societies ‘migrating’ / transforming from a status of poverty to a status of well-being whereby the geographic mobility is in fact only secondary. *Pacem in Terris* places the human value above any belonging to a political entity or nation and calls for global fraternity; *Laborem Exercens* explores the great conflict emerging between capital and labour which fed class struggles and for which the priority of labour related to the well being of all persons over capital is clearly spelled out; *Caritas Deus Est* and especially *Caritas in Veritate* further push the Churches’ mission as an action defined by charity. “Charity is the heart of the Church’s social doctrine. *Every responsibility* and *every commitment* spelt out by that doctrine is derived from charity which, according to the teaching of Jesus is the synthesis of the entire law. (cf Mt 22:36-40)”⁶

Interesting is indeed the fact that the Catholic Social Teaching is a proclamation of the truth of Christ’s love in society. “*The doctrine is a service to charity but its locus is truth.*” All we do in the social commitment needs truth. “*Without truth, without trust and love for what is true, there is no social conscience and responsibility, and social action ends up serving private interests and the logic of power, resulting in social fragmentation in a globalized society at difficult times like the present.*”⁷

This strengthens me in the further effort to define these responsibilities in terms of commitment to migrants. In general terms one could add that these include

- ✱ a better preparation and valorisation of the many Church actors (=> training and deployment of action),
- ✱ improved relations between Churches in the countries of departure and of arrival (=> unity),
- ✱ the need for a new approach to respond to the specific needs of the young (=> future oriented thinking),
- ✱ the reduction of the growing mutual mistrust between migrants and receiving communities (=> human dignity, development, justice and equity)
- ✱ the relations to be built with governments, civil society and local authorities (=> methodological approach).

⁶ *Caritas in Veritate* 2

⁷ *Caritas in Veritate* 5

The many congresses have defined these responsibilities in various ways to which I will not add but rather try to identify some very practical areas in which the Church can meaningfully contribute and commit:

- *Deepen and better articulate the theology of migration. There is a need to develop and communicate on these issues from a Catholic perspective*
- *Continue to speak as a missionary Church with an evangelical message, to respond to migrants, their families and the societies they have left, they transit through and to which they migrate.*
- *Contribute to a correct analysis of the causes of increasing human mobility, also to better combat poverty and thus reduce the need to migrate*
- *Contribute to the protection and the human dignity of all people*
- *Promote policies of inclusion and not of exclusion*
- *Accompany policy making bodies in preparing effective integration procedures at national and global levels (migration is too important to be left to politicians only: it involves all societal actors including the Church and faith based organisations)*
- *Well beyond a strictly economic or utilitarian lens for migration, promote a relational view point in which the human dignity focus and the family focus remain prevalent (this is another way of highlighting the need for maintaining and further developing the longer term vision instead of the present short term political approach)*
- *Provide guidance in relational values at societal and community level to increase social cohesion, solidarity and the pursuit of the common good*
- *Advance the connection between family unity and social cohesion in countries of origin as well as in countries of destination*
- *Contribute to sustainable development and poverty reduction in countries of origin as a means to enforce the right not to migrate*
- *Contribute to counter the present xenophobic approaches and movements*
- *Contribute to the better interpretation of human mobility as a potential rather than as a sociologic phenomenon to be contained; a truth, including all people on the roads and those they meet.*

All of the above hopefully contributes to further thinking and invites us to gradually assume the well known Church responsibilities in a new and rapidly changing environment. As a Church structure with

public status according to Canon Law, ICMC has already been deeply involved but clearly needs its members to take an active part in further walking the road. We have therefore worked towards establishing an Asian Working Group with the Asian Bishops' Conferences and we are pleased that the four years of preparatory work have now resulted in the creation of such a group. Things were finalized during the last ICMC Council meeting and a first meeting was held in September 2010 in Bangkok uniting representatives from the various regions in Asia. The list of participants has been sent to all Conferences since. We are also pleased that this could be done under the visionary leadership of Bishop Cantillas and in close collaboration with E.F. Bishop Charles Bo, President of the Office of Human Development (OHD) and the Secretary General Rev. fr. Nithyia. Together the group decided to put full focus on labour migration whereby following aspects will be developed:

- ✱ Protecting migrant workers in existing gaps (human rights, education, health - welfare), informing and alerting Bishops' Conferences and other Church actors providing them with guidelines on migrant protection;
- ✱ Bridging the Socio/cultural/legal gaps between sending and receiving countries;
- ✱ Playing a mediating role and engaging in social advocacy;
- ✱ Developing Pre-departure and post-arrival guidance/assistance;
- ✱ Becoming more pro-active in labour migration in terms of social analysis, strategies, planning, and implementation;
- ✱ preventing victimization
- ✱ Promoting the ratification of International conventions and other human rights instruments related to migrants

Option for the poor

Romero was once asked to explain that strange phrase, 'option for the poor'. He replied: "I offer you this by way of example. A building is on fire and you're watching it burn, standing and wondering if everyone is safe. Then someone tells you that your mother and your sister are inside that building. Your attitude changes completely. You're frantic; your mother and sister are burning and you'd do anything to rescue them even at the cost of getting charred. That's what it means to be truly committed. If we look at poverty from the outside, as if we're looking at a fire, that's not to opt for the poor, no matter how concerned we may be. We should get inside as if our own mother and sister were burning. Indeed it's Christ who is there, hungry and suffering."

INDIGENOUS PEOPLES OF ASIA AND THE CATHOLIC SOCIAL TEACHINGS

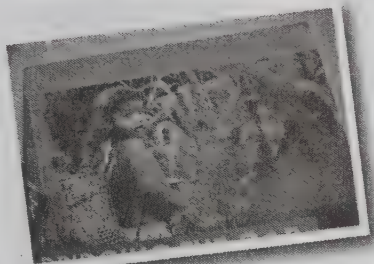
Rev. Dr. Felix Wilfred

Director, Asian Centre for Cross Cultural Studies, Chennai



Who are the Indigenous Peoples? ❖

- ❖ In recent times there has been a tension and polarization in defining the "indigenous peoples".
- ❖ Some states deny that they have "indigenous peoples" in their country. Other states want to determine who the indigenous people are. There is a fear of secessionist tendencies.
- ❖ Indigenous people want self-definition. They want to define themselves as indigenous independent of external criteria used by states or other international bodies.

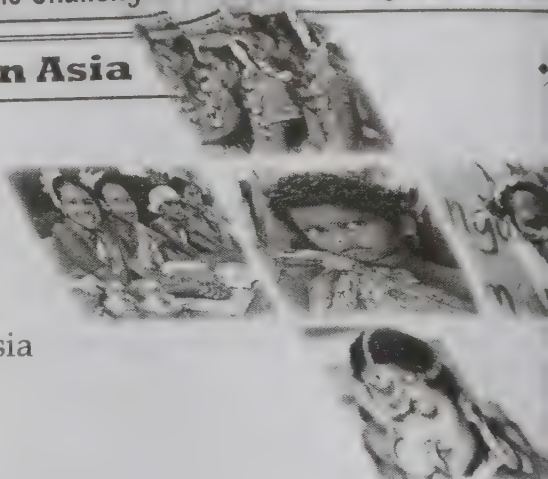


Attempts to Define Indigenous Peoples ❖

- ❖ The first attempt we find in no. 109 of *Indigenous and Tribal Populations Convention* (1957).
- ❖ This was refined in the ILO Convention no. 169 (1989). It defines thus indigenous peoples:
- ❖ "Peoples in independent countries who are regarded as indigenous on account of their descent from the populations which inhabited the country, or a geographical region to which the country belongs, at the time of conquest or colonization or the establishment of present state boundaries and who irrespective of their legal status, retain some or all of their own social, economic, cultural and political institutions."

Terminological Use in Asia

- ✱ Thailand: "indigenous hill peoples"
- ✱ Malaysia: "indigenous peoples", and "*Orang Asli*" specifically for indigenous groups in Peninsula Malaysia
- ✱ India: "scheduled tribes"
- ✱ Nepal: *Janajata*



Tensions in Definition

- ✱ The tension could be seen in the attempt to define indigenous people in UN and its various bodies.
- ✱ India, China, Pakistan and several other Asian states deny the category of indigenous peoples

The Issue of Citizenship

- ✱ Members of hill tribes in some countries like Thailand suffer from the lack of citizenship rights which makes them vulnerable and deprives them of basic social services.
- ✱ Tribal people in Myanmar face some worst consequences due to civil war. In 2006 in Karen state 27000 civilians were displaced and some 232 villages were destroyed.
- ✱ Between 2004 -2006, some 470,000 Mon, Karen, Shan and Karenni people were internally displaced as a consequence of violence, military operation and human rights violation.



Demography - Indigenous Peoples

- ✧ Indigenous people constitute about 5% of world population, but they are 15% of world's poor.
- ✧ 300 to 370 million people belong to indigenous people
- ✧ 70% of indigenous people live in Asia
- ✧ Indigenous peoples have 4000 languages
- ✧ More than 100 pharmaceutical companies are currently funding projects to study indigenous plant knowledge and specific plants used by native healers.

Key Facts

- ✧ Indigenous peoples suffer higher rates of poverty, landlessness, malnutrition and internal displacement than other members of society, and they have lower levels of literacy and less access to health services
- ✧ The Adivasi or tribal peoples of India constitute only 8% of the total population of the country, but 40% of them are internally displaced.
- ✧ In Thailand, more than 40% of indigenous girls and women who migrate to cities work in the sex trade. The majority of females trafficked across state borders in South-East Asia are from indigenous communities.

Loss of Lands and Territories

- ✧ Due to absence of precise legal regulations affirming indigenous peoples' customary rights over their traditional lands as well as in a number of unresolved disputes between state lands (including national parks, watershed areas and forestry preservation area) and community lands.
- ✧ Due to corruption by law enforcement officers related to the forest industry.



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Indigenous Lands - Contrasting Legal Situations

Philippines:.....

The Indigenous Peoples rights Act (1997) recognizes indigenous peoples' rights over their ancestral lands and territories and incorporates a process of demarcation and titling through the granting of Certificates of Ancestral Domain titles (CADT)



Cambodia:.....

Dispossession of indigenous lands has resulted in increased rates of poverty and forced migration. This situation is fostered by insufficient legal development of the indigenous land provisions of the Land Law, including the lack of a procedural framework for land demarcation and titling.



.....India:

After many massive protests by Adivasis and forest dwellers, India adopted the Scheduled Tribes and Other traditional Forest Dwellers Bill. It grants extensive rights to indigenous forest dwellers.



Displacement

- ✧ Displacement takes place concretely when huge dams are built and when mining is done in the territories of indigenous peoples.
- ✧ Example from India: 8.54 million tribals were displaced as a result of development projects in the states of Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Orissa.
- ✧ The Sardar Sarovar Dam and Power Project has caused the relocation of 320, 000 tribals and affecting their livelihood.
- ✧ Displacement of tribals in the state of Jharkhand as a result of mining.

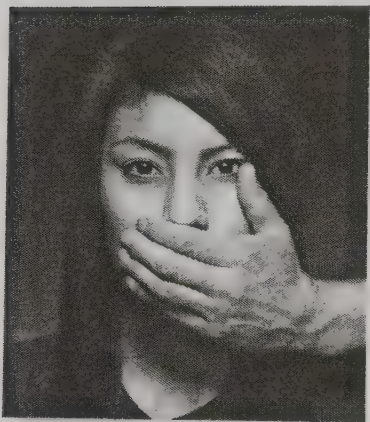


Major Issues Affecting Indigenous Peoples – From Policy Perspective

- ✧ The state policy of trying to integrate them in the national mainstream
- ✧ Development policies which displace the indigenous peoples and unsettle their identity and deprive their livelihood.
- ✧ State policy of conservation and reserved areas. Ban on logging affecting the indigenous communities. It imposes great costs in terms of livelihood options.
- ✧ All these policies moves the indigenous people from the centre to the periphery, from agents made into victims

Violence and Conflict

- ✧ The encroachment by migrants in the areas of indigenous peoples or state-policy of resettlement, neglect e have led to resurgence of ethnic violence.
- ✧ The war and conflict situation has affected seriously the development of indigenous peoples – their economy, education etc.



Violence Suffered by Indigenous Women

- ✧ Gender-based violence is used in armed conflicts. For example, India, Bangladesh, Myanmar, Philippines, etc.
- ✧ There are numerous cases of gang-rape, sexual enslavement and killing of tribal women by members of the military
- ✧ Increasing number of indigenous women have become victims of sexual trafficking and prostitution
- ✧ In areas such as Chiang Mai, in Thailand thousands of women are sex workers, and 70 – 80% of them are reportedly HIV positive.

State-Violence against Indigenous Peoples

- ✧ This seems to be the order of the day in many Asian countries: India, Nepal, Vietnam, Lao, Myanmar, Indonesia, etc.
- ✧ Massive human rights violation against indigenous people perpetrated by the military and paramilitary forces. It includes arbitrary arrests, torture, political killing of indigenous leaders, etc.



Rights of Indigenous Peoples

- ✧ Land and Resources
- ✧ Culture, language and education
- ✧ Development
- ✧ Self-determination, autonomy and self-government



Right to Land and Resources

- ✧ World Council of Indigenous Peoples (WCIP) submitted the following to UN Working group in 1985:
 1. Indigenous peoples shall have exclusive rights to their traditional lands and its resource.
 2. Where the lands and resources have been taken away, they shall be returned.
 3. The right to land includes surface and subsurface rights, full rights to interior and coastal waters...
 4. No action or course of conduct may be undertaken which may result in the destruction of land, air, water, sea ice, wildlife, habitat or natural resources without the free consent of the indigenous peoples.

Displacement - Development-caused

- ✧ Indigenous peoples are subject to displacement as their economic territories are submerged by dam projects or taken over for mining schemes.
- ✧ Example: In Bangladesh Kaptai Hydroelectric Project rendered some 100,000 of the indigenous peoples homeless and submerged about 54,000 acres equivalent to 40% of the land suitable for intensive cultivation.

Land Alienation

- ✧ This is one of the crucial issues affecting the indigenous peoples.
- ✧ Traditional mode of ownership was not based on documents and titles.
- ✧ Using modern patterns of ownership, the tribals and other indigenous peoples were alienated from their lands



Market Economy affecting the Indigenous Peoples

- ✧ The lands of the indigenous people are rich in natural resources – biodiversity, forest and reserves of minerals, etc.
- ✧ The intrusion of market forces which for profit exploit these resources aided often by state agencies and politicians.



Cultural Alienation

- ✧ The rich culture of indigenous peoples are not acknowledged and affirmed
- ✧ Their language is not fostered. Imposition of alien language and culture on indigenous peoples
- ✧ From being a living culture, the indigenous peoples' culture is made to object of conservation and exploited for commercial purpose and in tourism industry
- ✧ Cultural alienation leads to loss of identity



Emotional Ties with the Land

- ✧ For the indigenous peoples, land is not merely a possession and a means of production.
- ✧ The entire relationship between the spiritual life of indigenous peoples and mother earth has deeper emotional bonds.
- ✧ The land is not a commodity which can be acquired but something to be enjoyed freely.

Right to Culture, Language and Education

- ✧ There is a lot of discrimination against indigenous peoples.
- ✧ Government policies pursue discriminatory and oppressive cultural policies - they are essentially assimilative in character.
- ✧ The phenomenon of cultural genocide and ethnocide takes on various forms.
- ✧ The knowledge indigenous peoples had gathered over centuries is being exploited by commercial companies for their profit.



Right to Development

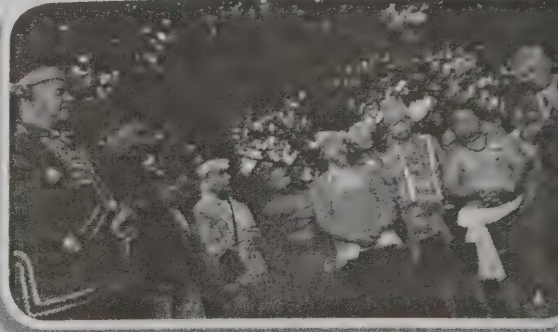
- ✧ The crisis of modern development model to sustainable development.
- ✧ The importance of regeneration of natural resources for development
- ✧ Indigenous people have developed for centuries systems of successful management of natural resources and sustainable development without wanton destruction.
- ✧ The right to development should respect the indigenous communities development practices.



Right to Self-determination

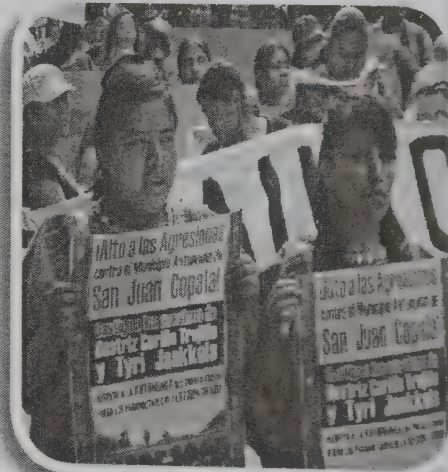
- ✧ Many Asian states are reluctant to recognize indigenous communities as "peoples" entitled to self-determination.
- ✧ Difference in the perception of the scope and content of this self-determination.
- ✧ International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights 1966 states:

"In those states in which ethnic, religious or linguistic minorities exist, persons belonging to such minorities shall not be denied the right, in community with the other members of their group, to enjoy their own culture, to profess and practice their own religion or to use their own language" (Article 27).



Indigenous Communities and Governance

- ✧ The traditional concept and practice of protected areas – it led to the exclusion of local people. It was managed by the state.
- ✧ Modern paradigm: Community Conserved Areas (CCCS). It is done through the agency of the local communities who
 - ★ are concerned about ecosystem through their relation to it
 - ★ take effective action to maintain or enhance biodiversity
 - ★ are major players in decision-making and implementing decisions.



IP as Contributors to the Community

- ✧ IP are not only who needs to be defended but also agents who have a lot to contribute to the larger society.
- ✧ To begin with, immense knowledge is embedded in their life, tradition and practices. They are the source of indigenous knowledge.

Indigenous Knowledge

- ✧ World Bank found that after several decades of massive developmental efforts, two-thirds of the world's population still could not survive without indigenous knowledge of plants, animals, insects, microbes and farming systems (UNDP 1994). The World Health Organization noted that up to 80 per cent of the world's population depends on traditional medicine for its primary health-needs (WHO 1998)



Role of Indigenous Women in Natural Resource Management

- ✧ Women suffer hardships when ecological degradation occurs in forests and other common



- pool resources. It makes difficult their traditional activities
- ✧ It is necessary that any policy formulation on natural resource management takes gender equations into account.
- ✧ There is need to acknowledge the specific needs, perspectives, and roles of women in natural resource management.

Catholic Social Teachings on Indigenous Peoples

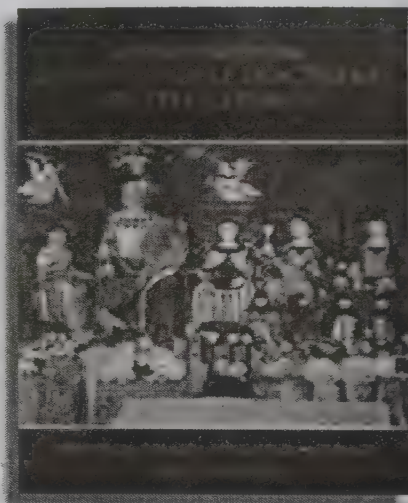
- ✧ There is relatively little dealing with the indigenous peoples in the social teachings.
- ✧ We have some speeches of Pope John Paul II, when he addresses groups of indigenous peoples of Canada, Ecuador, Australia.



- ✧ However, the social teachings have some basic principles which have very relevant application to the issues facing the indigenous peoples.

Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church

- ✧ Here we have at least in two places explicit reference to indigenous peoples.
- ✧ No. 180 in the Compendium speaks of the respect for different forms of property ownership.
- ✧ "If forms of property unknown in the past take on significant importance in the process of economic and social development, nonetheless, traditional forms of property must not be forgotten. Individual property is not the only legitimate form of ownership. The ancient forms of community property also has a particular importance...it is particularly characteristic of the social structure of many indigenous peoples" (no. 180)



- ✧ Land and Identity of indigenous peoples:

"The relationship of indigenous peoples to their lands and resources deserves particular attention, since it is a fundamental expression of their identity. ...The rights of indigenous peoples must be protected. These peoples offer an example of a life lived in harmony with the environment that they have come to know well and to preserve. Their extraordinary experience, which is an irreplaceable resource for all humanity, runs the risk of being lost together with the environment from which they originate." (*Compendium of the social doctrine of the Church* no. 471).

Principles from Social Teachings

Cultural Pluralism

- ✦ In the context of an evolutionary understanding of cultures which places them in a hierarchy, Vatican II propounds an anthropological and pluralistic understanding of culture



- ✦ *Gaudium et Spes* speaks of plurality of cultures each one different from the other and none of them to be placed one over the other.
- ✦ Such an understanding of culture helps us to see the different indigenous cultures and their values in their own terms and not in reference to others.

Principles

An Integrated Understanding of Justice

- ✦ Justice is to be understood not only within human societies but also in relation to the environment. The degradation and exploitation of nature we do affects the practice of justice.
- ✦ "Every violation of solidarity and civic friendship harms the environment, just as environmental deterioration in turn upsets relations in society." (Caritas in Veritate no. 51).

- ✧ It follows that indigenous peoples living in the natural habitat and availing the resources of nature are affected when nature is affected and its resources over-exploited. Exploitation of nature turns out to be injustice meted out to them.

Pluralistic Understanding of Society and Common Good.....

- ✧ Society is not made up of only individuals but also of groups and communities.
- ✧ Common good results from the cooperation of all groups in a society
- ✧ Therefore there can be no policy or practice of exclusion in the pursuit of common good
- ✧ As such indigenous peoples are integral part of the society and its pursuit of common good.

Universal Destination of Goods and Resources.....

- ✧ In an important teaching Vat. II (Gaudium et Spes) reinforced the traditional understanding of the primacy of the social nature of property and resources
- ✧ Private property rights are not absolute but subject to common good and social goals.
- ✧ This teaching help us to prevent the use of the forest and other resources of indigenous peoples for accumulation of wealth on the part of few individuals, company and corporations.

Principles - Vision

From Anthropocentric Vision to Environment conscious integral vision

- ✧ Traditional Christian vision has been strongly anthropocentric
- ✧ More recent documents of the Church, while speaking of environmental issues has moved more and more towards an integral vision of reality that includes nature and its condition
- ✧ The emergence of a new theology of creation – human beings as stewards of nature and not its masters.

Caritas in Veritate – Pope Benedict XVI

Speaking of the Environment, the Pope notes:

“Today the subject of development is also closely related to the duties arising from *our relationship to the natural environment*. The environment is God’s gift to everyone, and in our use of it we have a responsibility towards the poor, towards future generations and towards humanity as a whole. When nature, including the human being, is viewed as the result of mere chance or evolutionary determinism, our sense of responsibility wanes. In nature, the believer recognizes the wonderful result of God’s creative activity, which we may use responsibly to satisfy our legitimate needs, material or otherwise, while respecting the intrinsic balance of creation.” (no. 48).



- ❖ Such a vision of nature and environment leads us to a greater appreciation of indigenous peoples

Church’s Involvement for the cause of Indigenous Peoples

- ❖ Help develop the agency and subjecthood of the indigenous people.
- ❖ Development works in their favour is not a substitute.
- ❖ Listening and interacting with IP
- ❖ Any programmes to be developed always in dialogue and interaction with them
- ❖ This helps to develop their agency and subjecthood.



Help IP claim their rights with the State

- As citizens and as marginalized communities the IP have a right for their needs to be met.
- Some states – like in India – have special provisions for the indigenous peoples.
- Hence assisting the IP to claim their entitlements with the state.

Social Equity for IP in Educational Institutions of the Church

- Almost in all countries, the educational level of IP is much lower than other groups.
- In India, for example, the enrolment of the tribals in higher education is even lower than that of Dalits.
- "...Within the poor however the GER was the lowest among the poor belonging to ST and SC, followed by OBC and others. The GER for poor belonging to ST, SC, OBC and other is 1.55%, 1.89%, 2.30% and 3.58% respectively." (S.Thorat)



Providing Social and Cultural Capital to IP

- What is social and cultural capital?
- Some examples
- Church could increase the opportunities for the IP by helping them build up social and cultural capital.



Centres for Indigenous Knowledge

- ✧ In every higher education institutions run by the Church, I propose that there be a Centre for Indigenous Knowledge, which will valorize the contribution of IP and which will promote in various departments and disciplines indigenous knowledge.



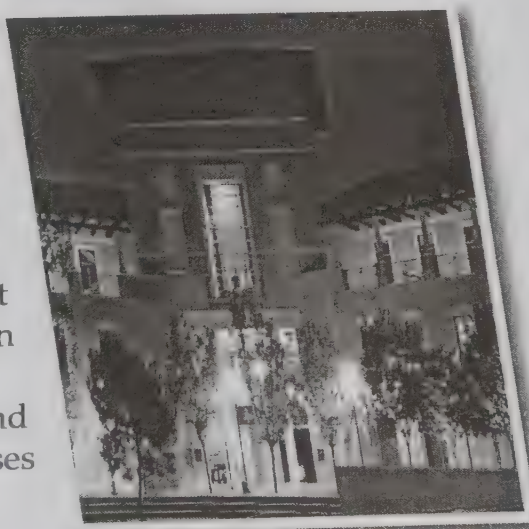
Advocacy Programmes

- ✧ The Church could promote advocacy programmes in support of the IP.
- ✧ This could be done more effectively by networking with civil society groups.



Negotiating Modernity

- ✧ Church has been one of the agents of modernization in Asian societies—through education, social reforms, etc.
- ✧ Indigenous peoples stand in a relationship of ambiguity with the process of modernization: a tension between the traditional and the modern.
- ✧ Church can help in different ways IP in their negotiation with modernity.
- ✧ For this, it needs to understand the social and cultural processes IP are going through.



GENDER JUSTICE FOR WOMEN & GIRLS IN ASIA IN THE LIGHT OF CST

Sandie Cornish

Social spirituality.net, Australia



At the beginning of the third millennium gender justice remains one of the greatest challenges of our time. Across Asia we ask how we might promote gender justice in societies that may not fully accept the idea that women's rights are human rights, or that human rights are more than a western construct? How might we better witness to our belief that both women and men are made in the image and likeness of God, and that their common personhood gives rise to the same human dignity and human rights?

Data for the Millennium Development Goal 3 indicators concerning gender equity and the empowerment of women paint a general picture of gender inequality in the world, and in our region. I will situate these indicators within economic, political and social systems, and recall the issues named as priorities by women and their organizations.

God is at work in our world, in the particularities of every part of Asia today. It is the task of each of us to attend to the movement of God's Spirit and to respond concretely in our own places, as well as responding together at a Pan-Asian level. I will note some deep desires arising in our region, which I believe to be positive signs of the times.

Scripture, Catholic Social Teaching, and human experience will help us to discern our call to incarnate God's love in our societies, giving it flesh and bones here and now. By doing this we also make our own small contribution from the unique contexts of Asia to the unfolding of the global tradition of Catholic Social Teaching. I will highlight four key principles which provide an ethical framework that can guide our necessarily diverse local efforts to promote gender justice.

Finally, I will offer some concrete suggestions of ways in which the Church might promote gender justice.

So let us start by following the incarnational path of Jesus by entering into the data of human experience.

1 Women's Priority Concerns.....

Respect for women as subjects rather than objects of the struggle for gender justice, requires that we listen to what women themselves are saying about their experiences and hopes. Concrete manifestations of gender injustice vary between countries as do the priorities of women. This table gives some examples.

For Reflection

What are women naming as the most important issues in your country?

FABC Consultations¹

Issues raised by women in FABC consultations include:

- ★ Negative attitudes towards women's bodies such as the stigmatization of women's physical functions as 'impure', and the sexual objectification of women
- ★ The restriction of women to the home and exclusion from decision-making and leadership in public life
- ★ Trafficking of women and children, and sex tourism
- ★ Violence against women which is rooted in a cultural valuation of women below men, including domestic violence
- ★ Poverty which forces women to seek work in urban centres or overseas, where they are often vulnerable to exploitation and abuse
- ★ Extreme religious and cultural controls exercised over women in the name of protection
- ★ Dowry customs
- ★ Female feticide and infanticide
- ★ Gender exclusive language

International Union of Superiors General²

The International Union of Superiors General Directions Statement provides us with a picture of what is concerning these women leaders within the church:

- ★ Abuse and sexual exploitation of women, especially trafficking
- ★ Education and formation of women
- ★ Cancellation of international debt
- ★ Creation of a culture of peace
- ★ Integrity of creation.

The Sisters of the Good Shepherd

Similarly we can look to the international and regional priorities of the orders of religious women who are active in our own local contexts. By way of example, the Good Shepherd Sisters, for whom I am working, have set three international priorities. These have been taken up enthusiastically in their Asia Pacific region networks:

- ★ Migration
- ★ Prostitution and Trafficking
- ★ The integrity of creation.

World Union of Catholic Women's Organizations

The resolutions passed at the 2010 international assembly of World Union of Catholic Women's Organizations³ provide an interesting indication of the shared action agenda of Catholic Women's Leagues around the world.

- ★ End the Use of Information Technology in Sexual Exploitation of Children
- ★ Promote a Covenant between Human Beings and the Environment
- ★ Rescue the Children of the Street
- ★ Campaign for a Culture of Life
- ★ Work to Abolish Forced Marriage
- ★ Strengthen Training of Catholic Leaders
- ★ Defend and Support Migrants
- ★ Commit to Ecumenical and Interfaith Dialogue
- ★ Produce a Statistical Evaluation of Poverty According to Sex
- ★ Prevent Inappropriate Sexualisation of Children
- ★ Mobilize to Halt Infanticide
- ★ Reaffirm the Family Unit

The Beijing Platform for Action

The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (issued by the Fourth World Conference on Women in 1995) identified twelve critical areas for action to achieve gender justice.

The work of many women's NGO's regionally and internationally, along with successive +5 reviews of the Beijing Platform, including at the UNESCO level, continue to affirm the importance of these areas for action.

- ★ Women and Poverty
- ★ Education and training of women
- ★ Health
- ★ Violence against women
- ★ Armed conflict
- ★ The economy
- ★ Power and decision making
- ★ Institutional mechanisms for the advancement of women
- ★ Human rights of women
- ★ The media
- ★ The environment
- ★ And the girl-child

...: Saldanha, Virginia. "The Church in the New Millennium: Learning to Be in Solidarity with Women." *FABC Papers* 92c (2000).

² <http://www.uisg.org/English/misdirect.html>

³ <http://www.wucwo.org/app/MediaFile/File.bin?Pk=262>



2. Church Action Towards Gender Justice in Asia

The principles of Catholic Social Teaching help us to judge situations but they are also intended to guide action for change. Drawing on these principles and on my reading of the social reality, I offer the following ideas for action by local Churches in Asia. Not all of them will be practical or effective in every situation – prudential judgments by people of wisdom familiar with the particular context will be needed. Nor do these ideas constitute a comprehensive action plan, rather it is my hope that they will get the conversation started and encourage creative thinking about responses.

2.1 Modeling Shared Decision Making & Leadership.....

If the Church wishes to teach it must also be a witness to its own proclaimed values. Models of inclusive leadership could be developed for local churches and gender quotas for management, professional and leadership positions in Church agencies could be considered.

Permanent, ongoing and appropriately resourced structures and processes are needed for the inclusion of women's perspectives and experiences. The Churches of Asia have a strong tradition of dialogue with cultures and other religious traditions to draw on. The 'triple dialogue' methodology – dialogue of life, of action, and of theological reflection – can serve the struggle for gender justice. It is particularly important that women's input to the development of the local social magisterium be actively sought.

2.2 Gender Based Violence.....

By providing shelter, medical, legal and psychological support services to women and children affected by gender-based violence Churches affirm their dignity and rights and stand in solidarity with them. This sends a public message that the Christian faith condemns and does not justify or condone gender-based violence. As cultural institutions local Churches have a strong role to play in forming people's values, attitudes and patterns of behavior towards women.

Marriage preparation courses should acknowledge the reality of gender based violence and could explain that Church teaching supports the dignity and human rights of women.

Information about how to access help in case of gender based violence could be provided to women.

Preventative programs with young people can focus positively on building respectful relationships and living free from violence.

Programs for perpetrators can help them to understand and change their behavior.

As part of civil society Churches can contribute to the common good by lobbying governments to ensure that all forms of gender-based violence are criminal offences and that laws are effectively enforced. By listening to the women affected by gender violence in their countries local churches will understand what changes in laws, policies and practices should be advocated.

Church organizations can also leverage connection with the global human family by lobbying national governments to ratify the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women⁴ and to actively fulfill the treaty obligations that it creates.

Research by Catholic universities and scholars into effective ways of changing the behavior of perpetrators of gender-based violence would be a valuable contribution.

2.3 Trafficking and Forced & Servile Marriage

Although these practices may be covert and hidden, women religious and their organizations are often able to reach at least some of the women affected. Local Churches could accept the leadership of religious women in this area and get behind their efforts more actively.

Church organizations can be active in lobbying for laws that address trafficking in persons and forced and servile marriage, and for effective policing of any relevant laws that exist.

Churches are sometimes seen as uncritical supporters of marriage and the family – we can communicate more clearly that we do not see forced or servile marriages as real marriages but rather an evil to be eradicated.

⁴ Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women, 1979 <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/>

In many places the nature and extent of forced and servile marriage is not well understood. Research could assist in the development of more effective responses.

2.4 Exploitation of Female Migrants.....✦

Education and vocational training for women and girls may provide some potential migrants with decent livelihood options at home avoiding migration.

Better connections between local churches in sending and receiving countries or regions can facilitate more effective pastoral care and practical assistance to migrants.

No significant receiving country has ratified the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Their Families⁵. Churches in sending countries can appeal to the churches in receiving countries to act in solidarity by bringing pressure to bear on their governments to sign and ratify this Convention.

An awareness campaign and appeal to solidarity could be directed to those Catholics who employ migrant women workers.

Finally, the Church could contribute to research into the gender impact of budgets at local and national levels and better collection of gender disaggregated data through our universities and research bodies where they exist.

⁵ International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Their Families, <http://www2.ohchr.org/english/law/cmw.htm>

Talisman

"I will give you a talisman. Whenever you are in doubt, or when the self becomes too much with you, apply the following test. Recall the face of the poorest and the weakest man [woman] whom you may have seen, and ask yourself, if the step you contemplate is going to be of any use to him [her]. Will he [she] gain anything by it? Will it restore him [her] to a control over his [her] own life and destiny? In other words, will it lead to swaraj [freedom] for the hungry and spiritually starving millions? Then you will find your doubts and your self melt away."

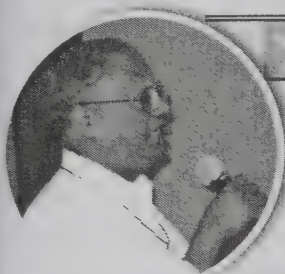
—M. K. Gandhi

ECO-JUST SOCIETY IN A DIVIDED WORLD

ECOLOGICAL ETHICS

Dr. Soosai Arokiasamy S.J.

Vidyajyoti College of Theology, Delhi, India.



Context



✱ The rapidly increasing destruction of the environment and disruption of the ecosystems of our planet stare us in the face.

✱ The creeping chaos of the world reveals still more sharply its deep link with the divisions of the human community and oppressions and exploitation of people.

- ✱ Broken people and wounded earth, degraded environment through reckless greedy exploitation of nature and poisoning pollution go together. Our memories of recent disasters.
- ✱ Every country has its own story to tell of its people thrown up as the disposable numbers by its policy and model of development in compact with modern science and technology and of its deforested landscapes, eroded soil, creeping deserts, polluted water and air.
- ✱ The lately intensified consciousness of global warming is part of the ecological tragedy calling for serious attention.
- ✱ We stand, therefore, for an eco-ethic that focuses on obligations towards wholeness of human life built on justice, freedom, participation, dignity and solidarity and its organic connectedness to nature and its eco-systems.
- ✱ Obligations of justice to people and their well-being and prevention of nature's degradation and preservation of its wholeness, its conservation and enhancement belong to our way of being and acting in the symbiotic relationality of humans and nature.
- ✱ We must revise and expand our understanding of ethics of responsibility for a world that is just and earth as home for all generations of humans and all living beings of the planet.
- ✱ Nature is a web of relations. Denial of relationality is denial of being. Human beings and nature are constituted in a net-work

of complex relations. Relational constitution of being calls for a relational way of knowing reality. To know reality is to know it in its relationality

- ✧ Narrow anthropocentric relationality of human beings disturbs the harmony of the human community and damages the greater community of humans and nature through sins of commission of exploitation, rape and pollution of our earth and the planet under the influence of egotistic and dualistic world views and of omission in caring for the integrity of the earth and the wholeness of the planet. Sustainability of a just, participatory society goes with sustainable earth. This formula concretizes the ecological crisis and the new ethical mandate in a divided world by coupling just and participatory society with integrity of creation.
- ✧ The same expression of integrity of creation instead of sustainability is better adapted to express the value of nature while the concept of sustainability can consider nature (the non-human creation of living beings and the elements of the earth) as a deposit of resources for human exploitation.

Intrinsic values and reverence for life

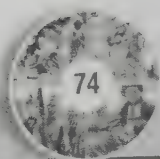
- ✧ In a relational perspective, humanity and nature belong to a set of graded values. The big change demanded is a cultural, social and spiritual metanoia for the intrinsic value of nature, respect and reverence for what is transcendent beyond purely utilitarian considerations.
- ✧ Here we can speak of the need for ecological conversion in the language of John Paul II. In this perspective, purposive nature of every being in relationality is recognised.
- ✧ Modern science and technological innovations including biotechnology and genetic experiments have functioned with the premise that non-human life exists for humans alone and then it can be endlessly instrumentalised for their benefit.
- ✧ Here we must avoid an approach that makes human beings are just part of nature . Hence their distinctive nature is flattened with the nature of other beings because of the exaggerated one-sided view of conservation of nature. This is unacceptable.
- ✧ Benedict XVI warns us against the pitfalls of such one-sided views in *Caritas in Veritate* (no. 48): "But it should also be stressed that it is contrary to authentic development to view nature as

something more important than the human person. This position leads to attitudes of neo-paganism or a new pantheism — human salvation cannot come from nature alone, understood in a purely naturalistic sense. This having been said, it is also necessary to reject the opposite position, which aims at total technical dominion over nature, because the natural environment is more than raw material to be manipulated at our pleasure; it is a wondrous work of the Creator containing a “grammar” which sets forth ends and criteria for its wise use, not its reckless exploitation.”

- ❖ To avert the disaster of death of all life we need 'to convert ourselves from utilitarian value of life to intrinsic value of life. For this we recognize that there is a gradation in the intrinsic value of life. This recognition is essential for a liberatively balanced ecoethic that promotes the justice of human society and integrity of all life. Our reverence for life is part of a perspective which recognizes both the intrinsic and inalienable dignity of the humans and the intrinsic value of nature within the greater relationality and interdependence of all beings.

Science, technology and model of development

- ❖ The modern State perpetuates a fundamental power-divide in society in which the elite make decisions for others, for their lives and destinies, denying them participation in the economic and political affairs of the State. The dualistic science views nature only in a utilitarian and instrumentalist perspective. Nature does not have any intrinsic value
- ❖ Public interest science brings criteria of ecological sustainability and justice in auditing technological choices and its politics.
- ❖ In this audit people who are the underside of society participate so that just, participatory society, sustainable development and integrity of nature are promoted and resist false models of development that destroy life support systems of the earth.
- ❖ Eco-ethic has to create awareness of values and endow with power to act and to make covenants and commitment for development that promotes justice and sustainability.
- ❖ I hold that religion can and should answer the ecological question. Their specific contribution bears on perspectives of human life, life of other beings, earth and cosmos and their



interconnectedness and the values and attitudes religions inculcate to us for our life in common.

- ✧ The paradigms of world -views they contain communicate a spiritual vision and generate values and attitudes for human behavior.
- ✧ Their explicit or latent meanings for a liberative wholesome eco-ethic need to be articulated within a critical view of the religious traditions in history.
- ✧ Christianity and Islam present human being as the crown of creation and as God's vice gerent.
- ✧ In the biblical tradition, human persons are created in the image of God.
- ✧ These images need rethinking in the context of ecological crisis.
- ✧ The wisdom of religions is eco-sensitive to human-and-nature relationality.
- ✧ But a re-reading of this wisdom that carries a concern for justice and conservation of nature becomes a common agenda of a wider ecumenism of all religions
- ✧ All religions have to enter into an interreligious project to respond to justice and integrity of nature.
- ✧ In Christianity, there is an awakening to the ecological crisis and even a sense of guilt for a tradition of interpretation of humans as charged with dominion over nature.
- ✧ Recent popes have also spoken on the ecological crisis, especially, Pope Paul VI, John Paul II and Benedict XVI.
- ✧ Creation account in Genesis (1: 26-28) speaks of dominion given to humans by God. The one-sided incomplete interpretation of these texts neglected the deeper understanding of humans and all other creation coming from the hands of God, the source of all life and beings and their total dependence on this absolute source and the consequent inter- dependence of all.
- ✧ We need to include a relational view that human is a partner and a servant, intelligent and creative, in a community of relationships in which interdependence, cooperation and conservation become important values.
- ✧ In Genesis 2:15 man is called "to cultivate and keep the earth". To cultivate and to keep the earth (abad/shamar) could also mean 'serve' and 'guard' the earth.

Eco-Just Society in a Divided World Ecological Ethics

- ✧ This means that humankind is not just master of creation but servant.
- ✧ He is called to serve the earth (abad, adama cf. Gen. 2:5).
- ✧ Through sin this belonging to the earth and the vocation to serve and care for the earth are broken.
- ✧ The punishment itself as Kahl interprets,³¹ meaning to return to the ground, "for out of it you were taken; you are dust and to dust, you shall return" (Gen. 3:19) in terms of conversion.
- ✧ Christian faith should contribute towards an eco-sensitive culture and eco-ethic of responsibility for the integrity of creation and repair the damage done by the culture of domination and subjugation of the earth through its non-liberative narrow anthropocentrism.
- ✧ In the Gospel perspective, the reversal is that the humans who are masters have to become servants of all living beings including humans.

Little traditions and people's movements from the underside

- ✧ The people of little traditions, i.e., tribals who are usually the marginalized and ecological movements waged by victims of modern development hold a promise for politics of justice and ecological conservation.
- ✧ Until the voices of the little people are heard and their wisdom listened to, all our struggle for justice and eco-integrity stand the danger of being sucked into the mega power of the modern science and technology under the banner of neo-liberal capitalism.
- ✧ The adivasis of my country and indigenous peoples of the Asian continent have a millennial tradition of life in close kinship with land, mountains and forests as gift of the Supreme Spirit.
- ✧ In their strong communitarian and egalitarian ethos and way of life land, forests, water and mountains are not commodities to be bought and sold but source and support of life and symbols of God's provident care and love.
- ✧ The ecological movements from the underside of the exploited reveal the inadequacy and non-sustainability of development followed by the State and point to the need for another direction of development which secures justice and ensures integrity of nature.

- ✧ These movements are redefining the concept of development for a new civilization.
- ✧ The oft-quoted letter of the Chief Seattle sounds a powerful warning to the modern ethos of commercialistic resource-intensive limitless progress:
- ✧ "The great chief in Washington sends word that he wishes to buy our land... How can you buy or sell the sky, the warmth of the land?
- ✧ The idea is strange to us. If we do not own the freshness of the air and the sparkle of the water, how can you buy them?
- ✧ Every part of the Earth is sacred to my people. We are part of the Earth and the Earth is part of us.
- ✧ The perfumed flowers are our sisters; the deer, the horse, the great eagle, these our brothers, The rocky crests, the juices in meadows, the body heat of the pony and man - all belong to the same family."



Agenda for a liberative ethic of ecology

Antyodaya as starting point



- ✧ Response to ecological crisis is eminently an ethical task.
- ✧ The unjust division of human society and rupture of eco-wholeness point to the degradation (chaos) of the universe (cosmos), the home (oikos) common to humans and all other living beings.
- ✧ To build the community of all as oikumene in a harmony of right relations and thus ensure justice, sustainability and well-being of all now and for the future is a historical task.
- ✧ The standpoint from which ethical understanding and commitment should flow is the underside of human society, the victims and refugees of modern development.
- ✧ To listen to their cries for justice, peace and wholeness should ever remain as a necessary starting-point in our response to the ecological crisis.
- ✧ Thus the structure of moral commitment will include commitment to the liberation of the exploited and oppressed of our modernizing society.
- ✧ Without this antyodaya which is justice, freedom, life and dignity for the wretched of the earth, our struggle for the wholeness



of the biotic community of the earth and the conservation of nature (sarvodaya) would be flawed and would ideologically favor the status quo.

Human dignity and habitable earth



- ✱ Human dignity traditionally understood in the framework of narrow anthropocentrism reinforces the idea of human being as crown and master of creation leading to rapacious human dominion over it.
- ✱ It needs to be revised in relational terms of co-existence and pro-existence and service for the integrity of creation.
- ✱ It calls for the realization of that human dignity lived in harmonious relationships with other living beings which have their own intrinsic value.
- ✱ Ecological ethic should critique reductionist and alienating system of knowledge and stress the need for holistic and relational vision of reality.
- ✱ Only on the basis of such ecological ethic can we discern the new imperatives to justice and sustainability. To day in the situation of ecological crisis all discourse on human rights should include an ecological perspective

Human rights and rights of the earth



- ✱ In Indian approach to ethics, duty (dharma) has primacy over right.
- ✱ Every right calls for a corresponding duty: the right to justice for the duty to do justice,
- ✱ the right to life for the duty to keep life (respect and reverence for life).
- ✱ Similarly, right to a healthy clean habitable environment calls for the duty to keep and care for such an environment.
- ✱ Soil erosion, deforestation, pollution of the air and creeping desertification of the earth's surface are violations against Mother Earth.
- ✱ She is denied her right to rest, to Sabbath by which she renews herself. Moltmann develops this idea as Sabbath of creation.



- ✧ We may ask how the Mother Earth can generate life and support her children.
- ✧ Today there is a growing awareness of global warming, mainly due to excessive emission of greenhouse gases. This is also part of the ecological crisis.
- ✧ Kyoto protocol and subsequent meetings try to address the reduction of green house gases. I do not go into it at the moment in detail. I record here that global warming and its causes have to be addressed though there are a few who contest the effects of global warming.

Ecology and common good



- ✧ Pope John XXIII defines common good as "the sum total of those conditions of social living whereby men are enabled more fully and more readily to achieve their perfection" (Mater et Magistra, no. 65).
- ✧ The concept of common good is central to the social teaching of the Church in a situation of ecological crisis. Today the concept of the common good needs to include the perspectives of ecojust society.
- ✧ If justice is the core of the common good, justice due to humans should be integrated with justice due to the earth.
- ✧ Environmental conservation and ecological wholeness are essential to interhuman and social Justice.
- ✧ Environmental issues are justice issues related to people's basic need for survival, dignity of life, health and well-being. Ecological concern has entered the social magisterium of the Church.
- ✧ "Peace with God" calls for friendliness with nature, as exemplified in the life of Francis of Assisi;
- ✧ "fraternity with all the good and beautiful things of God's creation, lies within the greater and higher fraternity which exists in the human family."
- ✧ The common good is the integrated bonum of both humans and nature. Creating ecological consciousness for justice and sustainability is a task of the church's social teaching.
- ✧ It should help towards the formation of ecological conscience that facilitates our moral decisions and choices which reckon with eco-relatedness of our life.

Responsibility and ecology



- ✧ If the earth is the home for all humans of both present and future, as well as all other living beings, responsibility extends to inter-generations and future generations.
- ✧ This means that we must guard ourselves against all egoistic or one-sided understanding of responsibility;
- ✧ it should look forward to future generations' right to a habitable earth. (Here cf Benedict XVI)
- ✧ Here cf Benedict XVI) In this exercise, responsibility should concern the qualitative parameters of justice, life and sustainability which hold good for the present and the future. For this, we have to rid ourselves of all greed and possessive spirit, cultivate aparigraha (non-attachment) and asteya (non-stealing), and such social behavior as promotes life and conserves integrity of nature.
- ✧ "The Church has a responsibility towards creation and she must assert this responsibility in the public sphere.
- ✧ In so doing, she must defend not only earth, water and air as gifts of creation that belong to everyone.
- ✧ She must above all protect mankind from self-destruction.
- ✧ There is need for what might be called a human ecology, correctly understood. The deterioration of nature is in fact closely connected to the culture that shapes human coexistence: when "human ecology" is respected within society, environmental ecology also benefits.
- ✧ Just as human virtues are interrelated, such that the weakening of one places others at risk, so the ecological system is based on respect for a plan that affects both the health of society and its good relationship with nature."
- ✧ In a political ethic for ecology, we are aware of the structural sin of the mechanisms and ideologies of exploitation.
- ✧ A liberative politics of ecology can only be one that emerges from those who have been sinned against and from the consciousness that the earth has been sinned against.
- ✧ Such politics has to become effective at both local and global levels. The "greening" of global politics for ecological conservation can take place only through the values of justice, participation and sustainability.

CHURCH RESPONSE TO THE CONFLICTS IN ASIA AND THE TASK OF PEACE-BUILDING IN THE LIGHT OF CST

Ms. Ma. Ida Deng Giguiento
Catholic Relief Services, The Philippines



Context of Armed Conflicts

- ✧ 39 armed conflicts have been active in the Asia region from 1989-2009.
- ✧ 5 active armed conflicts in 2011 in the region are long-running (more than 10 years)
- ✧ Majority of the armed conflicts are intra state

Conflict Issues

Armed conflicts over territory
Armed conflicts over control of government
Communal violence
Politically-motivated violence
Human rights abuses
Rise of terrorist-related incidents

Causes and Risk Factors

POLITICAL (repression, lack of access to political rights, lack of security, availability of arms, weak governance)
ECONOMIC/RESOURCES (economic inequality, resource-based competitions, long-standing grievances)
SOCIAL (discrimination against minority groups, identity divisions)
CULTURAL (identity divisions, culture of violence/impunity)

Impact of Armed Conflicts

Direct Deaths (combatants and civilians)
Indirect deaths
Trauma
Social effects (division, polarization)
Displacement (internal and across borders)
Economic costs

Peacebuilding and Conflict Transformation

Peacebuilding is a long-term project of building peaceful, stable communities and societies.

Conflict Transformation is to envision and respond to the ebb and flow of social conflict as life-giving opportunities for creating constructive change processes that reduce violence, increase justice in direct interaction and social structures, and respond to real-life problems in human relationships.

Building Peace and Justice

Action on behalf of justice and participation in the transformation of the world fully appear to us as a constitutive dimension of the preaching of the Gospel, in other words, of the Church's mission for the redemption of the human race and its liberation from every oppressive situation. (Justice in the World (1971), 6.

CST and Peacebuilding

Peacebuilding in the light of CST

- ✧ offers guidance on the long-term process of building stable and peaceful communities.
- ✧ upholds positive peace as a vision. *Shalom* is the embodiment of positive peace.
- ✧ underscores the centrality of human dignity and connectedness of humanity (relationships)
- ✧ find meaning in the full expression of the principles of solidarity, common good, and subsidiarity.
- ✧ provide a framework that integrates upholding justice, reconciliation, conflict resolution, and development.

Peacebuilding in Asia

Acknowledging the realities of conflict/violence and the context of diversity in the Asia region, a robust peacebuilding ministry is necessary

Integrated Process of Peacebuilding

- Mobilizing the active support and participation of grassroots, middle, and top level actors
- Peacebuilding efforts directed towards changes at the personal, relational, structural, and cultural levels.

Church Peacebuilding Efforts

1. Dealing with violence
2. Healing and reconciliation
3. Conflict resolution
4. Building alternative social and political institutions

Working from Within

- ✧ Building capacities and commitment for peacebuilding through peace formation at different levels (BEC, parish, Dioceses)
- ✧ Strengthening programs and infrastructures for peace within the church
- ✧ Mobilizing the church as a vibrant peace constituency

GROUP REPORTS FROM BISHOPS AND NON-BISHOPS ON WAY FORWARD

SHARING AND DISCUSSIONS IN GROUPS

Group I: BISHOPS

Moderator: Bishop Selvanayagam

Presenter: Bishop Neetinathan

Group II: NON-BISHOPS

Moderator: Fr. Bonnie

Presenter: Ms. Sandie Cornish

Questions for sharing and reflection

1. What are our proposals to take forward the BISA VIII objectives, process and outcome to our Conferences, Dioceses and Parishes in Asia? Concrete recommendations would be appreciated.
2. Our special message/statement to our respective Conferences?
3. What are your expectations and proposals to OHD in terms of future course of action? Some concrete recommendations would be appreciated.
4. What are some of the themes for future, both in terms of immersion and reflection?

Response to Question 1:

- ✧ Communicate the BISA VIII process and content through a 'road show' in which the Message of the meeting and the material on the CD can be presented by participants. The messengers can enter into dialogue and answer questions so that the process is more interactive than sending documentation alone.
- ✧ Bishops who participated could share their experience with newer Bishops in their Conference and personally encourage them to attend the next BISA.

Response to Question 2:

- ✧ The group was very pleased that the BISA tradition has been revived and we are very grateful to Fr Nithiya for all his very hard work to make this happen.
- ✧ We felt honored to be invited to participate and to help in different ways.

- ✧ We all stand ready to assist and support the work of FABC-OHD and the Conferences.
- ✧ We believe that it is especially useful for more recently appointed Bishops to attend BISA. It can help them to more quickly gain a broader, more regional perspective, which contextualizes their Diocesan perspective.

Response to Question 3:

- ✧ It is important to allocate a lot of space to sharing experiences, reflection and discussion. In this way the broad picture of major issues in Asia will be kept before the BISA. At the same time, we suggest that BISAs do not try to take on too many issues in depth at once but rather focus on one or two issues in detail.
- ✧ The participants themselves, especially Bishops, can be the key resource people.
- ✧ If possible translation services be provided to broaden the range of people from local churches who can participate and so that all participants are able to take part more actively. Translators and equipment are readily available for hire in Bangkok.

Response to Question 4:

- ✧ The group felt that it is important for the themes for BISAs to arise from the existing experiences and priorities of the Conferences and sub regions so that BISAs add capacity to existing work rather than simply adding new tasks.
- ✧ The group strongly affirms Fr Nithiya's initiative of holding sub regional meetings. These can feed priorities into whole of Asia events as well as building collaboration between neighbors.
- ✧ Perhaps we can also borrow the custom of the FABC Theological Commission of consulting the Conferences on themes? This might take the form of an annual letter or survey.
- ✧ If the themes come from the Bishops themselves rather than consultants like us they are more likely to attract participants and to result in action.

The Response of the Church to the Challenges of Asia in the Light of CST

(18-24 January, 2012, Camillian Pastoral Care Centre, Bangkok, Thailand)

1. Preamble

We, the Archbishops, Bishops, Priests, Religious Women and Men and Lay Sisters and Brothers (thirty seven participants) from *seventeen Asian countries* gathered at Camillian Pastoral Care Centre, Bangkok, Thailand for the Bishops' Institute for Social Action (BISA VIII) eighth programme, immersed ourselves in the lives of the most vulnerable and marginalised people, reflected over our experiences and deliberated upon a socio-pastoral theological programme of action in the light of CST.

BISA goes back to the first General Assembly of the Federation of Asian Bishops' Conferences in Taipei, Taiwan in 1974 when the Asian Bishops "resolved, first of all, to be more truly 'The Church of the Poor'". It was then said that, "If we are to place ourselves at the side of the multitudes in our continent, we must in our way of life share something of their poverty. Church cannot set up islands of affluence in a sea of want and misery; our own personal lives must give witness to evangelical simplicity, no man how lowly or poor, should find it hard to come to us, and find in us their brothers". The Office of Human Development of the Federation of Asian Bishops' Conferences thus launched a series of programs to help the Church gradually become the Church of the Poor.

Seven meetings of the Asian Institute For Social Action (AISAs) were held to see how the Bishops could implement the Social Teachings at the diocesan level. Five programs of Faith Encounter in Social Action (FEISAs) brought the Catholic Church in direct contact with people of other Faiths. And spearheading these was a series of Bishops Institute for Social Action (BISAs).

The statements of the seven BISA meetings held between 1974-1986 manifest a progression in the bishops' understanding of the implications of becoming the Church of the Poor. BISAs I - III stressed the staggering extent of Asia's material poverty while

BISA IV to VII moved on to Collegiality of Bishops to implement the Catholic Social Thought of the Church. Now, 25 years after, the Office of Human Development of the Federation of Asian Bishops' Conference (FABC) is revisiting the BISA in response to the Struggles and Challenges of Asia today, responding to the struggles of the poor in the light of CST.

The revival of the BISA meetings after 25 years was very much felt as a necessity in the further pursuit of the goal to become the Church of the poor. Strategic questions were raised during this meeting trying to define the BISA meeting value in its historical juncture, what the BISA objectives and strategies could be, how these would be reached and what factors and issues would need to be taken into consideration in developing this new dynamic.

2. Strategies of BISA-VIII

BISA VIII meeting was prepared according to the following methodology

- ✧ *Immersion into the Lives of the Vulnerable People:* In small groups, BISA participants underwent exposure-immersion in pre-arranged areas of the poor and the marginalized – Migrants, Indigenous Peoples, HIV-affected people and trafficked women from 18th to 21st January, 2012.
- ✧ *Reflection on the Immersion Programme:* BISA participants reflected on this exposure-immersion and drew lessons which were consecutively shared in the assembly. *The experience of living amidst the marginalised* – the Indigenous Peoples, The Migrants, The victims of HIV/AIDS and of Human Trafficking, brought us closer to our own people facing similar challenges and forms of poverty in our own countries, sub-regions and parishes.
- ✧ *Inputs, Deliberations and Reflections:* Reflections on the various issues of the people of Asia and the responses of the Church in the light of the Catholic Social Teachings. The issues discussed were: inputs on the themes: a) Labour and Rights of Labourers, b) Migrants and their Families, c) Indigenous Peoples, d) Women and Children, e) Conflicts and Peace Building, f) Eco-Just Society followed by reports from the Countries and Church Based Organisations, deliberations in the plenary, group workshops and action plans.

3. Socio-Pastoral Theological Programme of Action



Through this pastoral-theological programme of action, the BISA participants as major Church actors in Asia, identified and discussed the concerns of the marginalised and proposed number of recommendations towards action applicable to all sectors. Our reflections and formulation of pastoral-theological programme of actions kept in mind the various sectors like the Parish/ BCCs, BECs, Diocese, Conferences, four Asian Zones (Central, South East, South and East) and Asia as a whole.

1. As we are all aware and speak about, Catholic Social Teachings continue to be amongst the best kept secrets. *We make a resolve to disseminate CST in the form and manner our people can understand and put into practice in our own places, that is, Parishes, Dioceses and Conferences. We further resolve, in the spirit of witness, to implement at least three directives of CST: i) just wages in our own parishes, institutions and organisations; ii) proper working conditions for our workers; and iii) representation and participation of the laity, both women and men in our deliberative and decision making bodies.*
2. We realise that many times, we work in a compartmentalised manner. *We realise and resolve that all the efforts of human development should become an integral part of our pastoral policies, programmes and priorities.* As one of the Bishops who participated in BISA VIII assured, "I shall report this experience with migrants and Indigenous Peoples to my Bishops Conference. I shall change the pastoral policy of my diocese based on the experience I had" we shall revisit the vision, mission, pastoral policies, programmes and priorities of our parishes/dioceses/ conferences at regular intervals and reorient ourselves for greater apostolic efficacy.
3. *We resolve to educate the Church and society regarding the issues of these most marginalized and vulnerable communities and evolve programmes of action to address their issues. Through the celebrations of Migrants Day, Refugee Day, Women's Day, Indigenous Peoples' Day, Minority Day etc.*
4. *We resolve to network with like-minded faith based and secular organisations and engage in advocacy work with local, provincial,*

national, Regional Organisations and Governments. In the field of migration such collaboration can be best developed over the CBC's and the Asian Working Group on Migrations recently established by the International Catholic Migration Commission and its members in Asia.

5. The members of the Church in Asia have affirmed and reaffirmed the resolve to become the Church of the poor. We have taken commendable initiatives in this regard. But we also realize that we have not truly become the Church of the poor. Hence, *we resolve that all our parishes, institutions, dioceses and conferences strive towards becoming the Church of the poor.* We also realize that in many situations, the Church is the only voice of the poor and the vulnerable.
6. *We resolve that we would proactively become the voice of the poor concretely.* Further, we work towards enhancing the capacity of our people who themselves are able to voice their concerns and issues. Thus, we would move towards a participatory leadership that results in ensuring the lives, dignity and rights of the people of Asia, especially of the poor and the vulnerable. It is also understood that the international political dimension is gaining importance and that collaborations in this sense need to be built to serve the broader boosting of the voice of the poor. More specifically, it was felt that migration issues cannot be discussed solely at national or regional level but that these issues need to be further developed within an international and labour oriented perspective.
7. In all our reflections, we realised time and again that *we need to get back to the pastoral cycle of immersion, reflection and action.* We also realised that there is an urgent need to work towards a spirituality of social commitment and action. All these do not happen with pious intensions but with spiritual commitment and openness to the Spirit of God, which moves us towards a programmed, personalised and institutionalised pastoral-theological programme of action. It is in this sense we share with you this message of BISA VIII.
8. We resolve to rededicate ourselves to work for the Reign of God and its values of Justice and Peace especially amidst the suffering millions in Asia. *We shall become agents of social change* by enabling the poor and the marginalized to claim their economic, social and cultural entitlements.

4. Action Plans at the Zonal Level

The participants went into zonal groups for a workshop to identify priority issues and evolve action plans to respond. They are:

4.1 South East Asian zone

Priority Issues: i) *migrants and their rights*, ii) *peace building and conflict resolution*. The action plans proposed are:

- ✱ Support the migrants with pre-departure and post arrival guidance with literature for ready reference
- ✱ Establish linkage between sending and receiving countries through dioceses.
- ✱ Organise a Peace building training and evolve a strategy on the Church's response towards the root causes of conflicts.

4.2 East Asian zone

Even though this region joined with the South East Asian group, the participants from this zone spelt out their special need. Due to the specific concerns of *Conflicts and peace building in East Asia* and due to their linguistic difficulty, it is urgent to organize a special consultation for East Asian Zone and find out the ways and means on how the Church has to proceed in responding their concerns.

4.3 South Asian zone

Priority issues: i) *migration and tourism* ii) *Extreme Poverty* The action plans proposed are:

- ✱ Offer guidance to the Conferences and dioceses through workshops to collect data of incoming and outgoing migrants and disseminate the legislations and other entitlements of migrants and victims of Tourism and human Trafficking
- ✱ Establish Migrants cell in City parishes and desk in the diocese and Special Commission at the Conferences to establish link between the place of origin and place of destination and providing pastoral care to the affected people. This holds good also for those affected by tourism and human Trafficking.
- ✱ Organise workshops on various forms of eradicating extreme forms of poverty and the role of the Church through Rights Based Approach.



4.4 Central Asian Zone

Even though this zone could not participate in BISA due to the shift of the programme from November to January, and due to several commitments in January, this emerging zone needs special consultation to address their specific issues.

In all our reflections, we realised time and again that we need to get back to the pastoral cycle of *immersion, reflection and action*. We also realised that there is an urgent need to work towards a spirituality of social commitment and action. All these do not happen with pious intensions but with spiritual commitment and openness to the Spirit of God, which moves us towards a programmed, personalised and institutionalised pastoral-theological programme of action. It is in this sense we share with you this message of BISA VIII.

5. Way forward

One message that repeatedly came up to us was, "Arise from your slumber". All the participants also brought home to themselves that we have done well with regard to responding to the people of Asia. But we also realised that just being engaged in development work is not sufficient to ensure the lives, dignity and rights of vulnerable groups like the migrants, workers, indigenous people, dalits, minorities, women, children, etc. *The Conferences and Dioceses should work out concrete policies and programmes of action to increase the opportunities for these people by enhancing their social and cultural capital so that they are able to carry on their lives effectively.*

1. It is felt appropriate and useful to organise BISA every year or at least once every two years. This may well prove to be of value if built alternating with the General Assembly of the FABC. The long gap of 25 years between BISA VII and BISA VIII, denies the scope for reflecting together as an Asian family towards evolving common programmes of actions.
2. The BISA programme should identify emerging priority areas to be addressed through immersion and reflection along with the country reports for a deeper understanding of the Asian Reality for further action. The participants themselves could be the resource persons besides some from outside.



3. We hope that in the future many new Bishops are to be encouraged to attend BISA IX. This would strengthen enhance the sense of collegiality and partnership with each other and within the conferences, zones and to ensure continuity of thought and action
4. The immersion programme which was well organised inspired participants and strengthened their commitment. It is suggested that similar exposures be organised in our own conferences. Since BISA VIII was organised after a gap of 25 years, we recommend that the successful experience and reflections be shared in the FABC General Assembly in Nov. 2012 for an effective involvement of many more bishops in future.
5. We recommend that the outcome of this BISA be shared with all the Conferences, Dioceses, parishes and BCCs in all the communications.

As members of the Church, we resolve to carry forward this process and echoing the resolve of the bishops of the First General Assembly of the FABC: *"to have the courage to speak up for the rights of the disadvantaged and powerless, against all forms of injustice, no matter from what source such abuse may come"* we will strive to be truly a Church of the Poor and the marginalized of Asia.

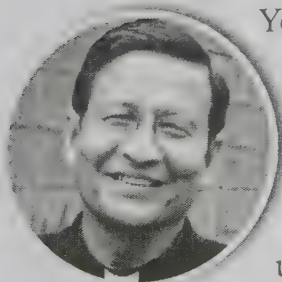
—Abp. Charles Bo, Chairman, & Fr. Nithiya, Exec. Secretary, OHD-FABC
and all the Participants of BISA-VIII

When someone steals another's clothes, we call them a thief. Should we not give the same name to one who could clothe the naked and does not? The bread in your cupboard belongs to the hungry; the coat unused in your closet belongs to the one who needs it; the shoes rotting in your closet belong to the one who has no shoes; the money which you hoard up belongs to the poor.

—St. Basil the Great

CONCLUDING MESSAGE OF THE BISA-VIII

Abp. Charles Bo SDB
Chairman, OHD-FABC



Your Grace Archbishops, Your Excellency Bishops and dear Fathers, Brothers and sisters,

I am very happy to stand before you to reflect together on our commitment to the poor, to be with them and to be for them. The Bishops Institute of social action –VIII edition has kept us all alive with the burning zeal of the Holy Spirit who is the Father of the Poor. This is not the end but the beginning of an effective commitment towards the cry of the poor of Asia.

In 1970, the Asian bishops set for themselves this primary task at their first meeting on the occasion of the visit of Pope Paul VI to Manila in 1970 said, "It is our resolve, first of all to be more truly the Church of the Poor" after looking at an Asia largely marked by poverty.

The task of translating this into reality was assigned to the Office for Human Development, set up in 1972 by the Asian bishops. Already in 1967 in his encyclical "Progress of the Peoples," Pope Paul VI emphasized the need for authentic human development – "a development which is for each and all the transition from less human conditions to more human conditions" and "embracing the higher values of love and friendship of prayer and contemplation."

Again at the first Plenary Assembly of the newly formed FABC, the bishops agreed that "the search for holiness and the search for justice, evangelization and promotion of true human development and liberation, are not duly opposed, but make up today the integral preaching of the Gospel especially in Asia. (Taipei, 1974)

The BISAs I-VII

Between 1974-86, the Office for Human Development organized seven Bishops' Institutes for Social Action (BISA) to involve bishops "in a continuing and communitarian dialogue of life with the poor." About 25 percent of Asia's bishops attended those institutes. We have begun this again with a renewed zeal.

Concluding Message of the BISA-Viii

The statements issued by the BISAs manifest a progression in their understanding of the implications of becoming the Church of the Poor. BISAs I-III stressed the staggering extent of Asia's material poverty.

"Our people are not poor as far as cultural traditions, human values and religious insights are concerned." (BISA I – II) The participants saw that material poverty is not an accident, much less a necessity, but rather the inevitable result of unjust social, economic and political structures designed for the aggrandizement of the well-to-do at the expense of the poor. As a witness to Christ, the Church, the bishops stressed, must make a whole-hearted commitment to the poor to opt in their favor. But what does this mean in practice?

"It does not mean merely to work for the poor, as it were from outside of from above, like a beneficent institution or an administrative agency."

"It does mean to work *with* the poor, and therefore to *be* with them, and so learn from them their real needs and aspirations, and to enable them to identify and articulate those needs and aspirations, if they are as yet unable to do so." (BISA I)

"We feel the need to live in contact with and close to the weak, to the people in need, without waiting for them to come to us. In a word, we acknowledge the need to work at the grassroots level." (BISA II)

The Church leaders to be credible participants in this process, "the Church should revise her own lifestyle and institutions in order to first realize within herself whatever she has to say about social justice." (BISA II)

The Asian bishops in BISA V have considerably deepened the understanding of the practical implications of becoming the Church of the Poor since the first Asian bishops meeting in 1970 and BISA I in 1974. "But what does it mean to be the Church of the Poor? Is not the Church for all men and women, for rich and poor, for saints and sinners? We found an answer in the way many Churches of Asia are moving in the direction of greater and greater involvement with the life of their people; their simply being with the poor, their attempts at working programs of human development – integral, respectful of the people's dignity, attuned to their cultures; their standing with them in their hard struggle

for justice and self empowerment; their insistence that the rich become themselves real members of the Church of the Poor by fulfilling their obligations in justice and charity toward the poor. The Church of the Poor must do all this. That is not all the Church of the Poor means certainly. But we see it does lead to movement in that direction. For it does indicate a preferential option and respect for the poor, expressing in practical terms Christ's own vision of His mission." (Lk 4:18-19)

In 1983, BISA VI asked: Are there new challenges and increasing obstacles to human development in Asia in the 1980s?"

BISA VII – added the new dimension of immersion. Exposure brought us closer to the stark reality of poverty, but immersion sought to experience reality from the perspective of the poor themselves. While exposure was like a doctor's visit for diagnosis, immersion led to genuine empathy through a lived-in experience of a genuine friend and family member. It is in BISA VII, that the methodology of the Pastoral Cycle came.

After 25 long years, the OHD has revived the BISA programmes to help the Bishops with a special immersion amidst and exposure to the cry of the poor and the marginalised.

- ✧ *The bishops went and stayed with the migrants in their families.*
- ✧ *They helped the Victims of HIV AIDS by cleaning their wounds and feeding them.*
- ✧ *The Bishops interacted with the Karen Indegenous people migrated from Myanmar, in the Burmese border*
- ✧ *They also interacted with the suffering victims under human Trafficking.*

This helped the bishops to strengthen their commitment towards the poor and also change their diocesan pastoral plan of actions. In the meeting of bishops among themselves, there emerged a strong desire that such immersion experience should be done if possible once a year. The BISA-VIII that we have experienced these days is the beginning of a new era to re-reading of the Catholic Social Teachings in the light of the growing challenges and struggles of our society.

We have opened up six crucial themes that challenge the Asian society today namely 1. Labour and Rights of labourers. 2. Migrants

Concluding Message of the BISA-Viii

and their families 3. Indigenous Peoples 4. Women and Children 5. Conflicts and Peace Building 6. Eco-just Society

I am happy that we have come up with concrete proposal through the message sent to the conferences and to the dioceses and people at large.

I thank each of you, Archbishops, Bishop, Priests, Religious and committed brothers and sisters, for these days of intense soul searching. We have jointly come to realise the greater potential available with us through the Spirit of God to move ahead with hope.

I request you all to promote the message of BISA -VIII to all the diocesan, Religious and Conference bulletin so that everyone is aware of where we are and to where we must go. In response to the appeal made by the team of Bishops, and in order to keep up the flame alive, we hope to plan for this experience every year. We rely on each of you to suggest to our OHD team two or three Bishops personally interested in the immersion programme.

I thank all the resource persons Fr. Demond, Fr. Felix, Ms. Sandie, Ms. Ida, Fr. Arok and Mr. Johan – all these have given us special thrust on the burning issues of Asia. I am grateful to all the former secretaries Fr. Bonnie, Fr. Desmond and Brother Rogers for their contributions to BISA Series for their contributions towards OHD. I thank Ms. Tess who has worked with dedication for OHD. In a special way, I thank Fr. Nithiya the Executive secretary, who from his tiny Capuchin cell connects to all the Conferences and has revived the BISA again.

"In Germany they first came for the communists and I didn't speak up because I wasn't a Communist. Then they came for the Jews, but I didn't speak up because I wasn't a Jew. Then they came for the trade unionists, and I didn't speak up because I wasn't a trade unionist. Then they came for the Catholics, and I didn't speak up because I was a Protestant. Then they came for me-and by that time no one was left to speak up."

—Pastor Martin Niemoller

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

Bishops Institute for Social Action (BISA) VIII *Response of the Church to the Struggles of Asia* *in the Light of Catholic Social Teaching* Camillian Pastoral Centre, Bangkok, Thailand 17-25 January 2012

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

Abp. Charles Bo
Archbishop's House
289 Theinbyu Road
Botahtaung P.O.11161
Yangon, Myanmar
Tel. No. + 95 1 245467 / 392667
Fax No. + 95 1 379059
Email: mcharles@gmail.com

Abp. Paul Grawng
Archbishop's House
82/25 – 26 Street
Mandalay, Myanmar
Tel. No. + 95 2 33916
Fax No. + 95 2 39531
Mobile: + 95 920 20476
Email: grawng.is.p@gmail.com

Abp. Matthias U Shwe
Archbishop's House
L-98 Bayintnaung Rd.,
Taunggyi 06011
Myanmar
Tel. No. + 95 812 1689
Fax No. + 95 812 2164
Email: ushwe1@gmail.com

Abp. Murphy Nicholas Xavier Pakiam
Archbishop's House
528 Jalan Bukit Nanas
50250 Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
Tel. No. + 60 3 2078 8828
Email: mpakiam@live.com

Bp. Antony Selvanayagam
Bishop of Penang
290 Jalan Macalister
10450 Pulau Pinang
Malaysia
Tel. No. + 60 4 229 2742
Fax No. + 60 4 228 5671
Mobile: + 60 17 437 6629
Email: pgdioce@streamyx.com

Bro. Pius Joseph
Gethsamany Friary
Batu 7, Jalan Cheras
43200 Cheras, Selangor
Malaysia
Tel. No. + 60 3 9075 4816
Mobile: + 60 12 764 3419
Email: bropius@hotmail.com

List of Participants

Ms. Cheryl Lee

3.0.8 Pantai Panorama
Jalan 112H, Off Jalan Kerenci
5200 Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
Mobile: + 60 17 882 2248
Email: moonbeam.lee@gmail.com

Bp. Rolando Tria Tirona, OCD

Prelature of Infanta
Infanta, Quezon
Philippines
Mobile: + 63 917 805 6565 /
+63 917 806 1777
Email: bprjt@yahoo.com

Ms. Ida (Deng) Giguiento

4th Floor, Philamlife Building
J.P. Rizal Street, 8000 Davao City
Tel. No. + 63 82 221 1761
Fax No. + 63 82 222 4979
Mobile: + 63 917 591 3496
Email: Marialda.Giguiento@crs.org

Bp. Philip Banchong Chaiyara

President, Caritas Thailand
498 Chyangkul, Ubon
Ratchathani
Thailand
Mobile: + 66 081 842 0190
Email: bchaiyara@yahoo.co.th

Fr. Pairat Sriprasert

Executive Director, Caritas
Thailand
122/11 CBCT Building
6th Floor, Soi Naksuwan Nonsi
Road
Chong Nonsi Yannawa
10120 Bangkok, Thailand
Tel. No: + 66 2 681 3900 / 277 0226
Email: fr.pairat@caritasthailand.net

Mr. Carlos Ocampo

Christian Conference of Asia
c/o Payap University
Muang, Chiangmai,
Thailand
Tel. No. + 66 53 243 906
Fax No. + 66 53 247 303
Mobile: + 66 83 571 4032
Email: charlie@cca.org.hk

Fr. John Nguyen Van Ty, SDB

Bishop's House
180 Nguyen Dinh Chieu St.,
District 3, Ho Chi Minh City
Viet Nam
Tel. No. +84 8 3930 9033
Fax No. + 84 8 3930 4520
Mobile: + 84 098 5233 548
Email: johntisdb@yahoo.com

Mr. Sinappan Samydorai

Task Force on ASEAN Migrant
Workers
Block 407, Pandan Gardens
#13-49
Singapore 600407
Email: samysd@yahoo.com

Fr. Bonnie Mendes

Bishops' House
Faisalabad 38000
Pakistan
Mobile: + 92 300 656 3503
Email: mendesbon@hotmail.com

Bp. Joseph Ponniah

Bishop's House
Batticaloa, Sri Lanka
Tel. No. + 94 65 222 7642
Mobile: + 94 0718 428 052
Email: ponralan@yahoo.com

Mr. Kanagaratnam**Theivandirarajah**

Caritas Sri Lanka

133 Kynsey Road

Colombo 8, Sri Lanka

Tel. No. + 94 11 269 1885 /

266 2475

Fax No. + 94 11 269 5136

Mobile: + 94 77 317 9334

Email: theiva06@yahoo.com;

sedec@slt.lk

Bp. Gervas Rozario

Bishop's House

P.O. Box 40

Rajshahi - 6000, BangladeshE

Tel. No. + 88 0721 761533 / 760465

Mobile: + 88 017 501 5807

Email: bpgervas@yahoo.com

Fr. Albert Rozario

Archbishop's House

1 Kakrail Road

P.O. Box 3

Dhaka 1000, Bangladesh

Tel. No. + 88 018 1974 4920

Email: falbertrozario@gmail.com

Bp. Lourdnada Daniel

Bishop's House

Jail Road, Nashik Road - 422 101

Maharashtra, India

Mobile: + 91 0942 288 2177

Email: lourdesdaniel@gmail.com

Bp. Anthonisamy Neethinathan

Catholic Bishop's House

Thimmavaram, Chingleput

Dt. 603 101 Tamil Nadu, India

Tel. No. + 944 2742 6649

Mobile: + 944 333 8643

Email: bpneethi@gmail.com

Fr. Felix WilfredDirector, Asian Centre for Cross
Cultural Studies

40/6A, Panayur Kuppam Road

Sholinganallur Post, Panayur

Chennai 600 119, Tamilnadu,

India

Tel. No. + 91 44 2453 0206

Fax No. + 91 44 2453 0443

Mobile: + 91 944 403 4665

Email: felixwilfred@gmail.com

Fr. Desmond D'Souza, CSSR

Redemptorist Fathers

199A, Alto Porvorim

Bardaez, Goa 403 501, India

Tel. No. + 91 832 2410 419 / 2417 586

Email: desmonddesousa@hotmail.com

Fr. Soosai Arokiasamy, SJ

Vidyajyoti Jesuit Residence

23, Raj Niwas Marg

Delhi 110054, India

Tel. No. + 91 2 393 4631

Fax No. + 91 11 2394 3478

Mobile: + 99 68 338 585

Email: samyvj@gmail.com

Fr. Rayar Kulandaisamy

Bishop's House

Thanjavur 613 007, India

Mobile: + 97 87 215 095

Email: rkfr@sify.com

Fr. Prakash Louis

Common Concerns of Bihar

Regional Pastoral Center

Navjyoti Niketan, Patna

Bihar 8000010, India

Mobile: + 91 943 003 2490

Email: prakashlouis2010@gmail.com

List of Participants

Sr. Mariola D'Souza

Santa Cruz Convent
Kulshekar, Mangalore
575005 India
Tel. No. + 91 824 223 2367
Mobile: + 91 959 188 5468
Email: mariolabs@gmail.com

Bp. Berard Toshio Oshikawa

Bishop's Residence
3-7-2, Asato, Naha-shi
Okinawa-ken, 902-0067, Japan
Email: BishopNaha@aol.com

Fr. Francis Fukamizu

Kiyose Catholic Church
Kiyose-shi Matsuyama 1-21-12
Tokyo 204-0022, Japan
Tel. No. 042 491 0104
Fax No. 042 491 1744
Email: donfx23@gmail.com

Ms. Terence Osorio

52 Princess Margaret Road
Homantin, Kowloon
Hong Kong
Tel. No. + 852 2714 5123 / 2712 3989
Fax No. + 852 - 2712 0152
Mobile: + 852 6136 4741
Email: coordinator@acpp.org
terence.osorio@hotmail.com

Mr. Paul Hwang Kyung Hoon

3F 32-2 Dang-san-dong 2-ga
Yeongdeungpo-gu, Seoul
Korea 150-042
Tel. No. + 822 2672 8344
Mobile: + 822 10 4137 6628
Email: ca_paul2004@yahoo.co.kr

Mr. Paul Pun Chi Meng

Largo de Sto. Agostinho
No. 1-A, Macau
Tel. No. + 853 2893 3240
Fax No. + 853 2855 4049
Mobile: + 843 6632 2522
Email: punchimeng@hotmail.com

Ms. Sandie Cornish

6/53 East Esplanade
Manly NSW 2095, Australia
Tel. No. + 61 2 9976 6260
Mobile: + 61 4868 865 766
Email: sandie@social-spirituality.net
www.eapi.admu-edu.ph

Mr. Kevin McBride

Pax Christi International
39 Jellicoe Parade, Waiheke Island
Auckland 1081, New Zealand
Tel. No. + 64 9 372 7026
Fax No. + 64 9 372 7026
Mobile: + 64 21 681 686
Email: paxchristi@extra.co.nz

Mr. Johan Ketelers

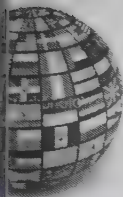
1, Rue de Varembe
P.O. Box 96
CH - 1211 Geneva 20
Switzerland
Tel. No. + 41 22 919 1020
Fax No. + 41 22 919 1048
Email: ketelers@icmc.net

Fr. Nithiya Sagayam, OFM Cap.

FABC – OHD Executive Secretary
St. Mathias Church,
23, Kamaraj salai, Ashok Nagar
Chennai - 600 083, India
Tel. No. +91 44 2366 1560
Mobile: +91 944 554 8000
Email: ohdcontact@gmail.com
nithiyas@gmail.com

Ms. Tess M. Aparente

1451 P. Guevarra Street
Sta. Cruz 1014, Manila
Philippines
Tel. No. + 63 2 731 3768
Fax No. + 63 2 743 2618
Mobile: + 63 920 508 4618
Email: aparentesm@rocketmail.com



ASEAN DECLARATION ON THE PROTECTION AND PROMOTION OF THE RIGHTS OF MIGRANT WORKERS

WE, the Heads of State/Government of the Member Countries of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (hereinafter referred to as ASEAN), attending the 12th ASEAN Summit on 13 January 2007 in Cebu, Philippines:

RECALLING the Declaration of ASEAN Concord II adopted at the 9th ASEAN Summit in Bali, Indonesia, which stipulated the establishment of an ASEAN Community resting on three pillars: an ASEAN Security Community, an ASEAN Economic Community and an ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community;

RECALLING also the Universal Declaration on Human Rights adopted and proclaimed by General Assembly Resolution 217(A) (III) of 10 December 1948, as well as other appropriate international instruments which all the ASEAN Member Countries have acceded to, in order to safeguard the human rights and fundamental freedoms of individuals such as the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the Convention on the Rights of the Child;

RECALLING further the Vientiane Action Programme adopted at the 10th ASEAN Summit in Vientiane, Lao PDR, which provides for, inter alia, the promotion of human rights and obligations to realise an open, dynamic and resilient ASEAN Community;

CONFIRMING our shared responsibility to realise a common vision for a secure and prosperous ASEAN Community by improving the quality of life of its people and strengthening its cultural identity towards a people-centered ASEAN through, among others, measures on the protection and promotion of the rights of migrant workers;

RECOGNISING the contributions of migrant workers to the society and economy of both receiving states and sending states of ASEAN;

RECOGNISING further the sovereignty of states in determining their own migration policy relating to migrant workers, including

determining entry into their territory and under which conditions migrant workers may remain;

ACKNOWLEDGING the legitimate concerns of the receiving and sending states over migrant workers, as well as the need to adopt appropriate and comprehensive migration policies on migrant workers;

ACKNOWLEDGING also the need to address cases of abuse and violence against migrant workers whenever such cases occur;

REITERATING that ASEAN should make further progress as a cohesive and caring society committed to enhancing the quality of life and well being of its people, especially those in the vulnerable and disadvantaged sectors;

HEREBY DECLARE AS FOLLOWS:

GENERAL PRINCIPLES

1. Both the receiving states and sending states shall strengthen the political, economic and social pillars of the ASEAN Community by promoting the full potential and dignity of migrant workers in a climate of freedom, equity, and stability in accordance with the laws, regulations, and policies of respective ASEAN Member Countries;
2. The receiving states and the sending states shall, for humanitarian reasons, closely cooperate to resolve the cases of migrant workers who, through no fault of their own, have subsequently become undocumented;
3. The receiving states and the sending states shall take into account the fundamental rights and dignity of migrant workers and family members already residing with them without undermining the application by the receiving states of their laws, regulations and policies; and
4. Nothing in the present Declaration shall be interpreted as implying the regularisation of the situation of migrant workers who are undocumented.

OBLIGATIONS OF RECEIVING STATES

Pursuant to the prevailing laws, regulations and policies of the respective receiving states, the receiving states will:

Asean Declaration on the Protection and Promotion

5. Intensify efforts to protect the fundamental human rights, promote the welfare and uphold human dignity of migrant workers;
6. Work towards the achievement of harmony and tolerance between receiving states and migrant workers;
7. Facilitate access to resources and remedies through information, training and education, access to justice, and social welfare services as appropriate and in accordance with the legislation of the receiving state, provided that they fulfill the requirements under applicable laws, regulations and policies of the said state, bilateral agreements and multilateral treaties;
8. Promote fair and appropriate employment protection, payment of wages, and adequate access to decent working and living conditions for migrant workers;
9. Provide migrant workers, who may be victims of discrimination, abuse, exploitation, violence, with adequate access to the legal and judicial system of the receiving states; and
10. Facilitate the exercise of consular functions to consular or diplomatic authorities of states of origin when a migrant worker is arrested or committed to prison or custody or detained in any other manner, under the laws and regulations of the receiving state and in accordance with the Vienna Convention on Consular Relations.

OBLIGATIONS OF SENDING STATES

Pursuant to the prevailing laws, regulations and policies of the respective sending states, the sending states will:

11. Enhance measures related to the promotion and protection of the rights of migrant workers;
12. Ensure access to employment and livelihood opportunities for their citizens as sustainable alternatives to migration of workers;
13. Set up policies and procedures to facilitate aspects of migration of workers, including recruitment, preparation for deployment overseas and protection of the migrant workers when abroad as well as repatriation and reintegration to the countries of origin; and

14. Establish and promote legal practices to regulate recruitment of migrant workers and adopt mechanisms to eliminate recruitment malpractices through legal and valid contracts, regulation and accreditation of recruitment agencies and employers, and blacklisting of negligent/unlawful agencies.

COMMITMENTS BY ASEAN

For purposes of protecting and promoting the rights of migrant workers, ASEAN Member Countries in accordance with national laws, regulations and policies, will:

15. Promote decent, humane, productive, dignified and remunerative employment for migrant workers;
16. Establish and implement human resource development programmes and reintegration programmes for migrant workers in their countries of origin;
17. Take concrete measures to prevent or curb the smuggling and trafficking in persons by, among others, introducing stiffer penalties for those who are involved in these activities;
18. Facilitate data-sharing on matters related to migrant workers, for the purpose of enhancing policies and programmes concerning migrant workers in both sending and receiving states;
19. Promote capacity building by sharing of information, best practices as well as opportunities and challenges encountered by ASEAN Member Countries in relation to protection and promotion of migrant workers' rights and welfare;
20. Extend assistance to migrant workers of ASEAN Member Countries who are caught in conflict or crisis situations outside ASEAN in the event of need and based on the capacities and resources of the Embassies and Consular Offices of the relevant ASEAN Member Countries, based on bilateral consultations and arrangements;
21. Encourage international organisations, ASEAN dialogue partners and other countries to respect the principles and extend support and assistance to the implementation of the measures contained in this Declaration; and
22. Task the relevant ASEAN bodies to follow up on the Declaration and to develop an ASEAN instrument on the protection and

Asean Declaration on the Protection and Promotion

promotion of the rights of migrant workers, consistent with ASEAN's vision of a caring and sharing Community, and direct the Secretary-General of ASEAN to submit annually a report on the progress of the implementation of the Declaration to the Summit through the ASEAN Ministerial Meeting.

DONE at Cebu, Philippines, this Thirteenth Day of January in the Year Two Thousand and Seven, in a single original copy in the English Language.

- For Brunei Darussalam: HAJI HASSANAL BOLKIAH, Sultan of Brunei Darussalam
- For the Kingdom of Cambodia: SAMDECH HUN SEN, Prime Minister
- For the Republic of Indonesia: DR. SUSILO BAMBANG YUDHOYONO, President
- For the Lao People's Democratic Republic: BOUASONE BOUPHAVANH, Prime Minister
- For Malaysia: DATO' SERI ABDULLAH AHMAD BADAWI, Prime Minister
- For the Union of Myanmar: GENERAL SOE WIN, Prime Minister
- For the Republic of the Philippines: GLORIA MACAPAGAL-ARROYO, President
- For the Republic of Singapore: LEE HSIEN LOONG, Prime Minister
- For the Kingdom of Thailand: GENERAL SURAYUD CHULANONT (RET.), Prime Minister
- For the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam: NGUYEN TAN DUNG, Prime Minister

ASEAN Declaration on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Migrant Workers from <http://www.workersconnection.org/articles.php?more=69>, and ASEAN Declaration on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Migrant Workers from <http://www.aseansec.org/19264.htm>



THE CHALLENGES AND STRUGGLES OF THE PEOPLE OF BANGLADESH AND RESPONSE OF THE LOCAL CHURCH

A Brief of Bangladesh

- Introduction : Bangladesh is a small Country. But it is very populated country, one of the highest in the world. Almost 140 million people are living in such a small country.
- Major challenges and struggles of Bangladesh;
- There are many challenges and struggles of the people of Bangladesh and these are:-
- Poverty: Our main struggle is struggle with the poverty. A small number of the people are rich. They own the maximum resources including landed property. Despite their riches, they try desperately to grab the land of the poor. Every moment the poor people live a life full of distress and pain. They suffer more oppression as they do not have any power for political influence. The upper class citizens treat them in a cruel manner.

Indigenous issue

- Another challenge is with the indigenous people. There are nearly more than 50 indigenous groups living mostly in the hilly and plain land. Most of these people are illiterate, landless, and not aware of their rights, land and other legal matters.
- As a result they are losing their precious land and becoming the victim of socially discriminative treatment. Powerful and influential muslim fundamentalist Bengalis are driving them away from their ancestral land through unlawful means and illegally preparing property ownership documents.

Internal Migration situation

- The another challenge is migration and to work for migrant. To achieve financial freedom a huge number of people (indigenous people, especially girls) are coming to mega city areas, like Dhaka, Chittagong .

The Challenges and Struggles of the People of Bangladesh

- They work in the beauty Parlour, mill factories, garments factories, houses as a domestic maids etc
- These young girls coming to city become victim of sexual harassment. Often they are forced into illegal sexual activities.

Challenge to work for them

- Its very difficult of work for them because they are very much engaged in their works and live scattered
- The owners of the beauty parlour do not cooperate.

Human Rights Violation

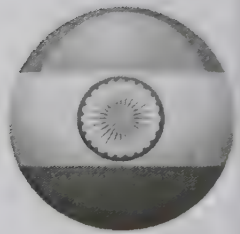
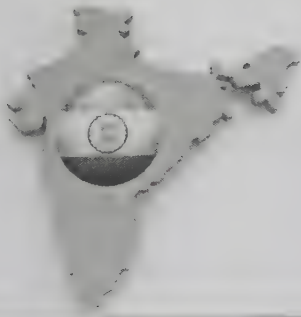
- Violation and misuse of basic human rights such as, right to Living, enjoying personal freedom, privacy, equality, impartiality, freedom of movement, religious freedom and the right to protection from torture etc. are increasing day by day. And this is a big challenge for us.

Response of the local Church:

- With all these challenges and struggles in mind, the Bishops of Bangladesh have given much priority to their work of establishing justice and peace among all their ministerial activities
- We stood beside the exploited, oppressed, neglected, ill-treated, less-fortunate poor and vulnerable people
- Awareness Building Program in a village
- It has been Working to bring a change in the lives of these people and in so doing establish a great, healthy, fair and peaceful society.
- The local Church also offers support and assistance to the indigenous young girls those who work in the parlour, factories and industries in their difficulties. It arranges mass for their spiritual care. It gives them awareness on their rights and dignity through various conference and conventions. It provides legal assistance to them if they get involved in any legal issues or allegation.

Conclusion

Being very small Christian community, we have been able to contribute in changing the social scenario of oppression and creating a society full of splendor, health, justice and peace.



AN OUTLINE OF THE PRESENTATION ON INDIA

—Nithiya (nithiyas@gmail.com)

1. World today: Social analysis Where the world's spending goes?

● Basic education	-6 billion USD
● Cosmetics industry	-8
● Water and sanitation	-9
● Ice cream	-11
● Perfumes in EU and US	-12
● Pet foods in EU and US	-17
● Cigarettes	-50
● Alcoholic drinks	-105
● Military spending	-780

2. India today

- Two types of India- fast developing economy
- Fast growing poor – totally disregarded
- Every third person is below poverty line
- 340 million – Vajpayee
- 300 million – migrants for jobs and survival
- 1-2% - share market holders

3. Who are the poor in India?

- Oppressed communities by caste system - Dalit
- Unreachable people - Tribals
- Unorganised and migrant workers
- Rural poor and Slum dwellers
- More than 6,000 Indian children below five years die everyday due to malnourishment...
- India hosts 57 million - or more than a third - of the world's 146 million undernourished children.
- –National Family Health Survey (covering 200,000 people from 15-54 years), conducted between December 2005 and August 2006

4. Malnourishment

- According to the National Family Health Survey (covering 200,000 people from 15-54 years), conducted between December 2005 and August 2006, more than 6,000 Indian children below five years die everyday due to malnourishment...
- India hosts 57 million - or more than a third of the world's 146 million undernourished children.

5. Surplus Vs. deprivation

- In 2001, starvation deaths were reported in more than a dozen Indian states, and this occurred at a time when the government proposed dumping its mammoth surplus into the sea to make room for the next year's surplus.
- Starvation amidst plenty
- India's surplus stocks reached a high level of 63 million tones in July 2002, which was a world record level.
- Amidst a situation of plenty, a massive 440 million (poor and hungry) people languish at the bottom of the economic pyramid in India
- With a 38 million ton surplus of grain in 2001, India had the resources to feed all of her billion plus people.

6. What is expected of the Church towards Human Development in India?

- Individual Vs. Social advocacy
- HR Based approach to development based on
 - ★ Economic Social and cultural Rights
 - ★ Civil and Political Rights
 - ★ Constitutional entitlements of the poor and the marginalised
- Making the Duty Bearer Accountable
- Use of Govt. Rules, and constitutions
- Non-violent Strategies
- Identify the issues
- Collect information – data collection

7. Mobilising people for non-violent transformation

- Networking
- Forming alliances
- Planning campaigns
- Involve media
- Building interreligious networking and involvement
- Building pressure on legislature
- Establish contacts with the systems
- Ultimate social transformation



RECONSTRUCTION OF JAPAN FROM THE TRIPLE DISASTERS

(Earthquake, Mega-Tsunami, and the Fukushima nuclear reactor)

Bangkok, 18–24, Jan., 2012

Bp. Berard T. Oshikawa, OFMConv.

Things We Shouldn't Forget

March 11, 2011, 2:46pm.

- Shall we ever forget where we were and what we were doing at that time?
- There are millions of peoples in the Tohoku area who cannot forget.
- They will never forget the day and the time when they lost their families and their friends, houses were swept away and whole towns vanished instantly.
- Soon after the earthquake of magnitude 9.0. the maximum in recorded domestic history, a huge tsunami caused unimaginable damage to the whole area of the East Pacific Ocean of Japan.

CBCJ Appeal

- As we face this kind of trial, we at the CBCJ expressed the Gospel values by valuing life.
- We stand in our statement to “Abolish Nuclear Plants Immediately”
- Facing The Tragedy of the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Plant Disaster – message, using different Media means it is not only the church but the Japanese society statement.



MACAU REPORT ON SOCIO PASTORAL CHALLENGES (MIGRANTS) AND CHURCH'S RESPONSE

(Presented at BISA VIII, Bangkok, Thailand, Jan. 17-25, 2012)

by Mr. PUN Chi Meng (Paul), Secretary General of Caritas Macau

Introduction:

Macau is a special administrative regions of the People's Republic of China. It situates on the western side of the Pearl River Delta, Guangdong. This region is heavily dependent on gambling and tourism. It was a Portuguese colony in 1887, and is both the first and last European colony in China. Basic Law of Macau and the Sino-Portuguese Joint Declaration stipulate that Macau operates with a high degree of autonomy until at least 2049, fifty years after the transfer from Portugal to China.

Under the policy of "one country, two systems", the PRC's Central People's Government is responsible for the territory's defense and foreign affairs, while macau maintains its own legal system, police force, monetary sustem, customs policy, and immigration policy. According to The World Factbook, Macau has the second highest life expectancy in the world. The size of Macau is about 29.5 km² and its population is about 550,000. The unemployment rate is 2.3 (Hong Kong is 3.3)

Migrant Issues and response:

We have about 90000 migrant workers and will reach soon 120000 in 2013. One third of the work force is migrants from mainland China, Philippines, Indonesia, Thailand, Nepal and Vietnam etc. The Diocese of Macau celebrates the World Day of Migrants during the first month of the year. This year the mass was held on January 15 with the theme "migrants and New Evangelization" The mass was presides by His Excellency the Bishop of Macau Jose Lai, DD and concelebrated by seven priests from different

religious congregations. During the Mass, he shared the message of the Holy Father for the migrants of the world. He encouraged the participant to do God's will unceasingly. he urged that migrant workers and missionaries to live with the people of Macau in harmony and peace, and respect the different cultures and faiths. He also urged us all, Catholics, to live wour evangelical values, and show the face of Christ to all. He closed his homily by saying that we have to serve one another with love and witness our faith in God. Prior to the celebration, in December 20, around 450 migrnat workers mostly from Indonesia and the Philippines also utilized to air out their concerns against the new Migrants Law and other issues of nom-resident workers in the territory.

They faced onvercharging of placement fees by agencies who helped them to find a job. The also voiced out the concern on the anti-migrant provisions of the "new labour Law" suach as the 6 months re-entry ban and levy on employers of foreign workers. The lack of clear law on placement agencies that will curb and put a stop to different forms of abuses that had been experienced b many migrants like confiscation of passports and other documents, collection of excessive fees equivalent to 3 to 10 months salaries, and connivance with employers.

The basic salary of the migrant workers is MOP2500 (USD312) with housing allowance of MOP500(USD62). Although, the income of the gambling industries increased by 40 percent last year. There is no sign of changing the basic salary of the migrants. Macau SAR government has set the minimum living index as monthly MOP3200 (USD400). At the time MOP2500 was set, the minumum living index as monthly MOP1200(USD150). Paul Pun Chi Meng shared with the Macau Times journalist that Employers should provide decent salaries. Migrants still do not have basic primary health care protection and they have to pay for basic treatment and check up. The high cost of medical fees is also a big burden on the local residents. Given the fact how much they earned, migrant patients cannot afford to pay for the medical bills.

Local students enjoys free education in pre-primary, primary, and secondary education in Macau, whereas, migrants' children are not qualified. They need to go to schools run by Government, or Church based organizations, like Caritas. S.J.de Brito Scool

Macau Report on Socio Pastoral Challenges (Migrants)

curently enrolled over 100 students from South Asia. They do not have to pay international school fees which is not affordable by most of the local students.

Caritas started a Overseas Labour Services for the Migrants in 2009. We helped migrants to cope with the education, medical and legal issues. Meanwhile, we worked with their respect Government officials and consul members. We also act as mediator when they have problems with their employers. In order to help them do better work, we are now working with the migrants young leaders and potential ones. We hope they will be able to support the fellow co-workers, and friends from the same country. We organized seminars and workshops for the migrants to get together and to share their thought and experiences at work as well as any issues in Macau.

Catholic Pastoral Center and some NGOs have also taken a major role in assisting migrants from the Philippines and Indonesia. However, there is still a lot to do with the migrant workers from mainland China.

Most of the Chinese migrants are so busy at work and they less likely to join the activities run by the Church. Caritas Macau is planning to visit the factories and work places, so that they will learn what we are doing.

Caritas has taken a step forward to speak for the migrants, however, the impact is not strong enough. We have over one third of the work force are migrants. Our voices should be able to reach to the decision makers and the law makers. The fact is most of the law makers have paid more concerns to local workers. They are the ones who can vote. The migrants they paid tax, but they do not get any medical or social benefit.

Part of the information from wikipedia.org, cawinfo.org, Macau Times



“ARISE FROM YOUR SLUMBER!”

Beloved brothers and sisters in Christ, I bring you warmest greetings from the exotic land of Malaysia! Malaysia is a rich melting pot of races, cultures, traditions and religions. (Come! You are most welcome to visit us!) Catholics are a small minority - We are a mere 3.5% of the majority Muslim population. There are a total of 9 dioceses in Peninsular and East Malaysia. Although the Catholic Church is but a “little flock,” we are deeply committed to our mission: to be the leaven and salt of the nation.

Malaysia, is currently undergoing a significant “turning point” at this juncture of our nation’s history. In this presentation, I would just highlight some of the significant challenges we face. In the area of **Politics**, there appear to be a Power shift in the Government: Past domination of the race based ruling coalition was eroded when 5 states were taken by the opposition in the last 2008 general elections, giving rise to the present unhealthy politicking.

In the area of **Economics**, the Government has implemented the New Economic Plans, highly favoring the Malays and Indigenous communities, causing grave consternation to the minority Chinese and Indian citizens. There is also an Influx of migrants to take up 3 “D” jobs, which has re-configured the population mix in Malaysia. In the **Social** realm, we see break up of families, increase in social ills and crimes. In the area of **Race and Religion** we find that there is increasing disgruntlement among non Muslims over the rapid erosion of religious rights. Sad to say, Government policies have become more and more Malay and Islam centric. There is widening racial polarization corresponding to the rise in Islam fundamentalism and a fear of proselytization of Muslims. Persecution of Christians continue, including the ban on the use of the word Allah by non Muslims, the ban on the import of Bibles from Indonesia, even sporadic burning of churches.

“Arise Fom Your Slumber!”

However, amidst these seemingly “crisis” situations, there exist signs of hope. There is a greater involvement of the youth, widespread social media networking for change and the birth of “People Power” e.g. the massive Hindraf, BERSIH I and II rallies lobbying for electoral reforms. I am happy to report that more and more, the Catholic Church is at the forefront and sees the need to partner with people of other beliefs and NGO’s to usher in a new “civilization of love” in Malaysia.

For the second part of my presentation, I would like to share on the response of the Malaysian Church to the promotion of the CST. Since the arrival of the foreign missionaries in the 15th century, the Church has lived out the teachings of the CST, by setting up schools, hospitals, welfare homes and outreaching to the poor.

In the past, the CST was widely disseminated in the 1970’s and 80’s by the Joyful Vanguards, YCS and YCW movements which have transformed Malaysian society. To-date, many NGO’s are led by Catholics, and the Catholic Church is at the forefront of the Christian Federation of Malaysia (CFM) and the National Interreligious Council MCCBCHST

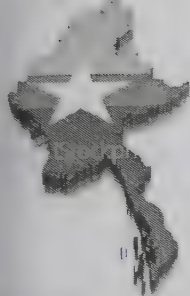
Despite prevailing challenges of awakening our Catholic faithful, the Malaysian Bishops take seriously the call of the FABC to engage in the triple dialogue of the poor, religion and culture. Recognizing that the Catholic lay faithful make up 99% of the Malaysian church and are the front line evangelizers, priority is placed in building parishes and empowering the BEC’s or Small Christian Communities. During every first Wednesday of the month, at least 40,000 Catholic faithful from the 2,000 BECs in Malaysia, gather in homes to pray and reflect on the Word of God and to witness the gospel values.

The Peninsular Malaysian Church has come out with new creative ways to incorporate the Pastoral Spiral Methodology through the LOOK – LISTEN & LIVE monthly Reflection papers used by the 40,000 Basic Ecclesial members. That is, LOOK at Life -LISTEN to the Word of God and Live in Love. All members of the BECs are encouraged to be good neighbours with people of other faiths, and the poor in their communities and work with the Parish Integral Human Development Ministry (PIHDM) set up in every parish. The various Diocesan Offices for Human Development in turn organizes formation and outreach programmes to assist

the PIHDM and the BECs. Awareness building and Exposure Immersion programmes are also organized during Lenten campaigns so as to sensitize them to the plight of the poor. If you are interested, samples of these BEC reflection papers and Lenten CDs can be found at the back of the room. However, more needs to be done to raise awareness of the CST, to equip the bishops, priests, religious and lay leaders with knowledge, skills and spirituality to live out the CST.

CONCLUSION

I would like to conclude by highlighting the fact that the human person is the heart of our mission. I echo the words of Cardinal Martino, who said, *"The Catholic Social Doctrine is not merely theoretical knowledge but is meant to be put into action!"* Yes, it is unto our hands that the Lord entrust the responsibility of debunking the famous slogan that "the CST is the best kept secret of the Church!" Let us be not be found guilty of what we denounce in the world or stand to be accused of being rich in rhetoric but weak in implementation! May all of us take up this pastoral challenge, join hands to study, disseminate and live out the CST and in doing so, actualize the reign of God in our various countries. Lord, May your Kingdom!



STRUGGLES OF THE PEOPLE IN MYANMAR

- ✧ Civil War resulting in tens of thousands of internal displaced persons and refugees, loss of life & property, danger of disease and famine.
- ✧ Discrimination based on Religion and race
- ✧ Migrant workers, trafficked persons

Church's response

- ✧ Nationwide prayers together with other Christians and in some places with adherents of other faiths.
- ✧ Letters of appeal to authorities to resolve conflicts peacefully , together with the Myanmar Council of Churches.
- ✧ In the case of migrants, initial contacts with the Bishops' Conferences of the countries of arrival.
- ✧ We are grateful to the Church in Thailand, Singapore and Malaysia for taking care of our migrants and for arranging priests, religious and lay pastoral leaders to accompany them.

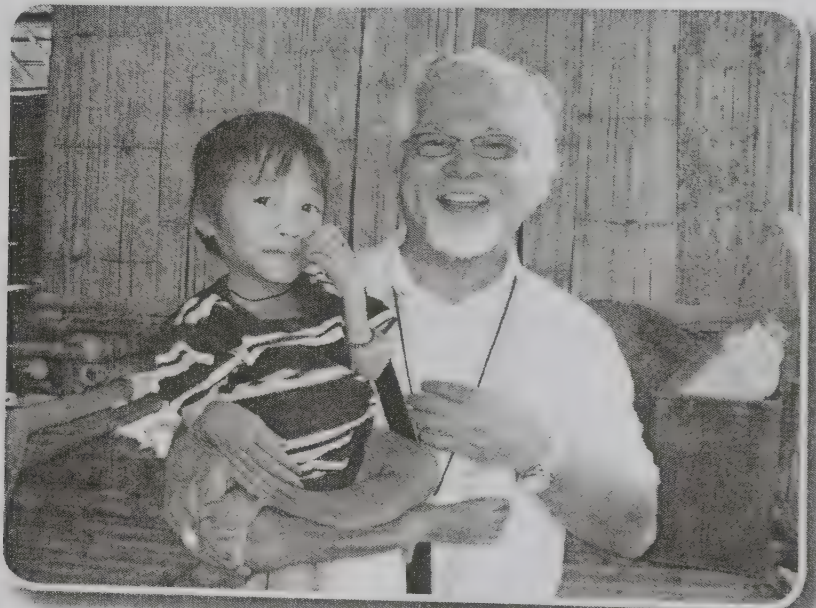
Many more struggles ...

- ✧ Modest responses to some of them through Karuna (Caritas) programmes.
- ✧ None or little to many of them.
- ✧ To many problems, little or no organized responses.

BISHOPS RETURN SPEECHLESS OVER THE CRY OF THE POOR, FROM "IMMERSION PROGRAM OF BISA VIII FABC-OHD

Bishop Berard Toshio Oshikawa from Japan conversing with a girl child of Indigenous people known as Karen in Rachapuri in Thailand. He went with a group of five persons and stayed with the people for two days to assess their plight. The words of bishops like Bp Berard is touching and insightful.

Bishop Berard said thus: "I came here on behalf of the Bishops Conference of Japan. I had no idea of BISA. But this experience with the poor migrants and IPs is something disturbing to me. I could not complete taking bath when I am reminded that people around me have no water even to drink. It is real shock. When I go back, I shall report this experience to my Bishops Conference. I shall change the pastoral policy of my dioceses based on the experience I have received in this experience. I am coming from Okinawa in Japan where we do not hear about any border dispute or migrants issue. It is something of the TV shows. But now I see it in front of my eyes. I will educate my people about this situation."



Bishop Berard from Okinawa, Japan, with a physically challenged girl in the house of the Karen Indigenous migrant family

Bishops Return Speechless Over the Cry of the Poor

Archbishops Paul Grawng and Matthias from Myanmar went with a group of five persons to study and live with the migrants in at Jetaai Squid Factory at Bangyapreak in Thailand (St. Annes Church). They witnessed the precarious working conditions.



Abp. Mathias and Abp. Paul Grawng with Ms. Lee Cheryl of Malaysia in the HIV AIDS centre



Bishop Ponniah Joseph from Sri Lanka along with the group of 4 stayed with the HIV and AIDS infected children and people in Camillian Social Center Rayong near Pattaya in Thailand. The Bp is feeding a terminally ill. Others were giving palliative care.

Poverty had many *avatharas*.



PAKISTAN

Pakistan is a country which has challenges at different levels. The Church in Pakistan with more than three million Christians has an opportunity to give witness in a difficult situation and also to make a significant contribution to the country. Half the number is Catholic. There are seven Catholic dioceses in the country.

In 2010, the country had two big murders, one of the Governor of the Punjab, a stalwart of the Pakistan People's Party, assassinated because he visited a Christian woman Asiya Bibi sentenced to death for blasphemy. He heard her story and said that her case should be re-opened or she should be pardoned. He was assassinated by his own bodyguard. The lawyers and others garlanded the murderer. The Islamic parties have strongly defended and protested the arrest of the assassin. Another striking point is that there was nobody to say a funeral prayer for the funeral of the Governor. There was just the family and almost nobody else.

The second was the Federal Minister for Minority Affairs, Shebaz Clement Bhatti from the Catholic village of Khushpur, Faisalabad diocese. He was gunned down because he wanted rights for the Christian minorities. He had the biggest funeral in the history of Christians of Pakistan. It was bigger even the funeral of Bishop John Joseph who sacrificed his life fighting the very same blasphemy law.

For some the only voices that reach to them are the cries of people threatened by the blasphemy law. The media particularly when it hears of a blasphemy case, they phone very day wanting to know what is the fate of Asyia bibi sentenced to death. The appeal against the sentence continues. The media wants to know what is the situation, the truth is that nothing changes in a day or weeks or months. However, the social media is full of it and nothing more.

Pakistan is in the fore front in the war on terror. The Christians have faced the wrath of those who are against the war that was

waged by USA and the NATO forces. Their excesses have been frowned upon in Pakistan. The Catholic Bishops Conference issued a pastoral letter condemning the attack of the NATO forces killing a number of the Pakistan forces.

That written assurance and compensation is not forthcoming. Law and order is weak in the country, hence the Church is not taking it for granted that will happen automatically. It is not a matter of property but of a matter of rights and the government cannot be allowed to just One has to struggle for its rights and the rights of the poor.

Prejudices and biases on the account of religion, sect, and gender in the curriculum should be removed," Mr. Jacob said. "The education policy that makes Islamic studies compulsory, with Arabic as an essential part, and the choice of ethics for non-Muslim students isolates and enhances discrimination against the minorities." The commission recommends making religious studies an optional subject at the college and university levels. "The syllabus content should show an equal respect to all religions, or, there should be no reference to a particular religion."

The Churches of all denominations have challenged the giving of 20 marks to Muslims alone for all admission examinations. It is a privilege used to deprive Christians of admissions. Christians have made court cases but the court is dragging its feet and not giving a verdict.

The Church is helping through Caritas Pakistan the victims of the massive damage caused by the floods of 2010. Most of the victims of the floods are Muslims. It is a challenge at different levels. However, the Church is trying to do it in difficult circumstances. The Church is determined not to allow anybody not even the government to get away with injustices. The latest has been the act of the government of the Punjab trying to take away the property of the Church in the city of Lahore.



SINGAPORE

OPENING OUR HEARTS TO MIGRANTS' PLIGHT*

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

Jesus has made it clear that He values the way we treat each other. For the Last Judgement, Jesus will consider acts done "to one of the least of these" (Matthew 25:40, 45), as having been done to Himself.

In other words, Jesus will look carefully at how we have treated the poor and marginalised during our lives. What we have done to them, we have done to Jesus in His eyes. When we reach that moment, will we be prepared for His judgement on our actions?

Historical events such as the slave trade, the Holocaust and apartheid offer particular insights into the thinking and behaviour of the people in those times. Otherwise "good" people were led to believe that "bad" acts were okay, and in some cases, even participated in carrying out those acts.

Others just looked the other way as if such abominable things did not exist around them. On the occasion of World Day of Migrants, which is celebrated in our Archdiocese on 30 October this year, I ask all Catholics to open up their hearts and minds to the plight of migrants in Singapore – more than 25 percent of the population.

We must ask ourselves how historians will view our attitudes and behaviours towards migrants years down the road. More importantly, how will Jesus view these actions?

Foreign matchmaking

Over the last few years, demand for "foreign matchmaking", where men pay agents to find a suitable foreign bride, has grown to the point where some consider it commonplace in Singapore.

In most cases, the brides are from very poor, rural families and are only looking for a better life. They speak very limited English,

Singapore: Opening our Hearts to Migrants' Plight*

and the "marriage" is often not more than an excuse for using a person for convenience.

Even more commonplace is the belief that domestic helpers should work seven days a week, sometimes even 24/7, with no days off and little or no time for themselves each day.

Some employers do not trust their helpers, feeling that they might "get into trouble" if given some time off. Others feel that they cannot possibly cope without help due to their own need, caring for a child, elderly parent, or someone with a disability.

In his message for the 97th World Day of Migrants and Refugees (2011), Pope Benedict XVI explains that while people may come from different backgrounds and experience different situations during their lives, we are all moving through life together, and we are all "one human family".

Therefore, "the value of work should be measured by the same standard and not according to the difference in nationality, religion or race" (Laborem Exercens 23).

In other words, migrants must be paid fair wages, given adequate food and ample time to rest each day and have the ability to reunite with their families on a regular basis.

Jesus' Golden Rule tells us to "do unto others as you would have them do unto you" (Matthew 7:12). As Catholics, we are called to follow this rule by showing respect for one another, most especially those living under our own roof.

"Give workers their day off"

For example, if you enjoy having a day off during the week, would it not follow that your domestic helper would also enjoy and appreciate this "luxury"?

Many organisations, including the Archdiocesan Commission for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant People (ACMI), offer classes on Sundays to help migrants improve their skills. By supporting your domestic helper in enrolling in such classes, you not only enable her to learn new skills and build confidence, but ultimately you help to create an atmosphere of trust and mutual respect in your household, which will benefit everyone.

Did you know that, in Singapore, one in six families employs a domestic helper, compared to most countries around the world where domestic help is reserved for only the ultra-rich? It is

unheard of in most countries to have help in the house, so in a way, we are very fortunate.

However, only 53 percent of domestic helpers receive one day off per month, and only about 12 percent receive one day off per week!

Another disturbing trend is the growing pattern of abuses of foreign wives and trafficking of women and children in Singapore, which has increased dramatically over the last five years. This needs to stop!

When historians look back at the Singapore of today, what will they say? Is it possible that the track we are currently on is not the right track in terms of our treatment of migrants?

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Please remain faithful to your own family back home, and teach them the self-discipline that you have learned, knowing that your hard work and sacrifices will provide a better life for future generations.

My dear brothers and sisters in Christ, on the occasion of World Day of Migrants, let us pray for all migrants in Singapore that they

Singapore: Opening our Hearts to Migrants' Plight*

may be given the opportunity to realise their dreams of building a better life for themselves and their families back home.

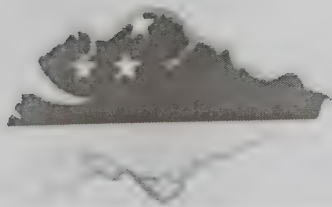
With the support of the Catholic community, through our own actions towards migrants, may we be the change that lights the way for others.

Yours in Christ.

Archbishop Nicholas Chia

*-from The Catholic News - Nov 06, 2011, Vol. 61, No 22

http://www.catholicnews.sg/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=6684:opening-our-hearts-to-migrants-plight&catid=287:november-06-2011-vol-61-no-22&Itemid=79



SINGAPORE

OPENING OUR HEARTS TO MIGRANTS' PLIGHT*

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The Catholic News - NOVEMBER 06, 2011, Vol. 61, No 22

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

Jesus has made it clear that He values the way we treat each other. For the Last Judgement, Jesus will consider acts done "to one of the least of these" (Matthew 25:40, 45), as having been done to Himself.

In other words, Jesus will look carefully at how we have treated the poor and marginalised during our lives. What we have done to them, we have done to Jesus in His eyes. When we reach that moment, will we be prepared for His judgement on our actions?

Historical events such as the slave trade, the Holocaust and apartheid offer particular insights into the thinking and behaviour of the people in those times. Otherwise "good" people were led to believe that "bad" acts were okay, and in some cases, even participated in carrying out those acts.

Others just looked the other way as if such abominable things did not exist around them. On the occasion of World Day of Migrants, which is celebrated in our Archdiocese on 30 October this year, I ask all Catholics to open up their hearts and minds to the plight of migrants in Singapore – more than 25 percent of the population.

We must ask ourselves how historians will view our attitudes and behaviours towards migrants years down the road. More importantly, how will Jesus view these actions?

Foreign matchmaking

Over the last few years, demand for "foreign matchmaking", where men pay agents to find a suitable foreign bride, has grown to the point where some consider it commonplace in Singapore.

In most cases, the brides are from very poor, rural families and are only looking for a better life. They speak very limited English,

Singapore: Opening our Hearts to Migrants' Plight*

and the "marriage" is often not more than an excuse for using a person for convenience.

Even more commonplace is the belief that domestic helpers should work seven days a week, sometimes even 24/7, with no days off and little or no time for themselves each day.

Some employers do not trust their helpers, feeling that they might "get into trouble" if given some time off. Others feel that they cannot possibly cope without help due to their own need, caring for a child, elderly parent, or someone with a disability.

In his message for the 97th World Day of Migrants and Refugees (2011), Pope Benedict XVI explains that while people may come from different backgrounds and experience different situations during their lives, we are all moving through life together, and we are all "one human family".

Therefore, "the value of work should be measured by the same standard and not according to the difference in nationality, religion or race" (Laborem Exercens 23).

In other words, migrants must be paid fair wages, given adequate food and ample time to rest each day and have the ability to reunite with their families on a regular basis.

Jesus' Golden Rule tells us to "do unto others as you would have them do unto you" (Matthew 7:12). As Catholics, we are called to follow this rule by showing respect for one another, most especially those living under our own roof.

"Give workers their day off"

For example, if you enjoy having a day off during the week, would it not follow that your domestic helper would also enjoy and appreciate this "luxury"?

Many organisations, including the Archdiocesan Commission for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant People (ACMI), offer classes on Sundays to help migrants improve their skills. By supporting your domestic helper in enrolling in such classes, you not only enable her to learn new skills and build confidence, but ultimately you help to create an atmosphere of trust and mutual respect in your household, which will benefit everyone.

Did you know that, in Singapore, one in six families employs a domestic helper, compared to most countries around the world where domestic help is reserved for only the ultra-rich? It is unheard of in most countries to have help in the house, so in a way, we are very fortunate.

However, only 53 percent of domestic helpers receive one day off per month, and only about 12 percent receive one day off per week!

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Spotlight on human trafficking

http://www.catholicnews.sg/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=6689:spotlight-on-human-trafficking&catid=287:november-06-2011-vol-61-no-22&Itemid=79

TheCatholicNews - NOVEMBER 06, 2011, Vol 61, No 22

Images on anti-human trafficking brochures distributed by the Conference of Religious Major Superiors of Malaysia-Singapore-Brunei.

The Religious of the region are distributing brochures on human trafficking to raise awareness of this growing problem.

A set of five information brochures have been prepared and will be given out in Religious-run parishes in Malaysia, Singapore and Brunei on Oct 30, World Day of Migrants, and on each Sunday of Advent.

The Conference of Religious Major Superiors of Malaysia-Singapore-Brunei (CRMS) had announced this Anti-Human Trafficking Project at the regional bishops' conference in July.

Human trafficking "is the fastest growing crime in the world and as Catholics we need to do something to fight it, says CRMS. "Pope John Paul II called it a shocking offence against human dignity."

According to project coordinator Franciscan Friar John Wong, the overview brochure, Slavery in the 21st Century, will be distributed on Oct 30. The other four brochures – Labour Trafficking, Child Trafficking, Trafficking for Sexual Exploitation, and Trafficking for Organ Removal, will be distributed during the Sundays of Advent in that order.

The brochures "were written to provide people, in their mid-teens and above, with basic information on human trafficking, our position on the issue as Catholics and how we can help victims", said Friar Wong.

In Singapore, the brochures will be available at the Church of St Mary of the Angels, Church of St Ignatius, Blessed Sacrament Church, Church of Sts Peter and Paul and Novena Church.

The Religious will also distribute the brochures in all their ministries in Malaysia, Singapore and Brunei, including schools.



COUNTRY REPORT FROM KOREA

Dr. Paul Hwang (Director of the Center for Asian Theology Solidarity (CATS))

Even after some 10 years has passed in 21st century, the world has still wrestled with and suffered serious challenges like globalization and neo-liberalism led by FTA, WTO, transcendent-national companies and international financial institutions like IMF and World Bank. In particular, the current economic and cultural phenomenon incur economic polarization and low birth rate as well as losing moral and spiritual values in South Korea whose situation seems getting worse.

The economic polarization is a part of result from neo-liberalism and has been closely linked to producing the rapid increasing rate of “irregular” workers or various sorts of contract workers in the society. Among laborers, “unrecorded” workers based on working hours or days, and “dispatched” workers take more than a half of the number of irregular workers, whose wage less than 75 percent of regular ones.

According to statistics of the National Statistical Office, the number of irregular workers has reached 53 percent of the whole workforce topped in the country in 2010 although it decreased to 52 percent in 2011.

Among the rate of irregular workers, women occupy 70.2 percent of the whole women workforce, aged 15-24 take 64.7 percent of the same age groups and 73.7 percent of over 55 years old, and 78.7 percent under highschool graduate. Much higher are the agricultural and fishery industries taking 91.7 percent and construction field 84.8 percent.

Although the definition of irregular workers has not been officially defined, their number have increased more and more and working condition has not improved yet. It is mainly because nearly all of profit-based companies prefer such irregular workers who have no basic insurances by law. For this reason, it is necessary

Country Report from Korea

for irregular workers to enjoy the same amount of labor with right wage as much as regular ones do.

Increasing irregular workers who get smaller wage has yielded other serious problems: working couple and their children's education. Financial difficulty forces them to work and they become a working couple. They should have a job to support their family especially their children's education expenses for which both parents should make money to meet it.

On the other hand, nearly all of students have been under strong pressure to enter university. It is so that they have to take extra classes in private educational institutes which charge much more money than official schools. Among those who kill themselves are such students under pressure. The number of suicide in the country has been topped in recent years among OECD countries. As of 2009, 28.4 people committed suicide out of every 100,000 people equivalent to 42.2 people who kill themselves every day. Those aged 10s to 30s are topped among the number of suicide. For both parents and their students, Korea is not a good place to live, indeed it seems to them "hell" so to speak.

According to an OECD report called "Factbook 2009", the birth rate of Korean especially those women aged 15-49 have dramatically fallen down. Their birth rate per person has more and more decreased from 4.53 persons in 1970 to 1.67 in 1985 and to 1.13 in 2006 which is the lowest rate among the OECD countries. It is not only lower than the average rate of OECD countries but also even lower than that of Japan and the U.S.A., only comparable with China.

Without doubt, the decreasing birth rate has been led to a drastic decrease of the population in Korea. Although the birth rate has rapidly increased soon after Korean War (1950-53), to be precise, increased 3 percentage points from the late 1950s to early 1960s, it has been dropped from 1 percentage point in 1996 to 0.29 in 2009.

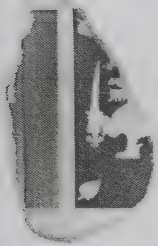
Such low birthrate has something to do with or accelerated the aging population indeed. After the year 2000, the rapid increasing rate of aging people particularly over 65 years old has reached 12.9 percent of the population in 2009. It is, therefore, anticipated that the aging population will take 38.2 percent of it comparable to Japan around the year 2050, if keeping the current tendency. Among the whole labor force, 65 years old above will also be expected

to quickly increase, having already reached 19.1 percent in 2005. The rapid increasing rate of people in old age will incur problems such as general welfare, medical insurance, retirement pension for them, putting aside decreasing workforce in the country.

Church's response to irregular workers and working couple is not proper enough to come up with practical-pastoral measures but stop short at analyzing the problems by organizing scholarly conferences on the matter. The local Church seems to opt migrant workers as "soft ministries" regarding them as the object of charity, while right acts have not been done for irregular workers so far.

Meanwhile, the current government has made the country's political situation worse than the past. The government-driven "restoration" project for four major rivers has been officially finished in last October. But during the project, the government confronted lots of objection and rallies against it from various sectors of the society including Catholic Church. They reasoned that it is not restoration but destroy of ecology system around the rivers for which the government has poured several billion dollars, the bloody money coming from people

Along with controversial construction of nuclear plants, the government and Navy have been trying to build a naval base in Jeju island, the southernmost island of the country called "the island of peace" designated by the government itself. Strong objection to the plan comes from various civil society led by Catholic Church especially Jeju diocese with strong support from Bishop Peter Kang of Jeju. They oppose setting up the military base which will destroy not only the island's ecology system but peace the Korean Peninsula.



CARITAS SRI LANKA – SEDEC

Introduction

Three priority areas of activity engaged our attention in the period 2010/2011. Firstly, the promotion of a Church role in Sri Lanka's post-war reconciliation process. Secondly, the Integral Human Development Program aimed at empowering the poorest and marginalized communities. Thirdly, assisting the resettlement and reconstruction process in the former war zones of North and East in order to expedite the return to normalcy in the lives of war-affected families.

Also, in this period, CSL consolidated its position as a leading faith-based humanitarian organization and received the recognition of the Government as an institution dedicated to serving the poor and the marginalized communities. We also maintained a close rapport with State authorities with whom we work in close cooperation at all times.

The above-mentioned priority areas of activity were supplemented by our focus on other social concerns such as child protection, migrant welfare, relief and rehabilitation, disaster preparedness and psychosocial support.

Reconciliation and Peace

The post-war scenario in Sri Lanka calls for an effective reconciliation process if the country is to move to a post-conflict phase and a sustainable peace. This is an urgent need to which the Church is prepared to respond since Christians are the only religious group comprised of both Tamils and Sinhalese adherents.

At the grass root level, the Caritas peace program has been carried out through a wide range of activities. Inter-diocesan exposure visits for Sinhalese and Tamil groups, including war widows of North and South, helped to form bridges of friendship and to experience first-hand the socio-economic realities and life

situations of one another. Interreligious and intercultural activities, peace rallies, peace meditation, workshops on non-violent communication and peace education programs were conducted throughout the Districts by our network of 13 Diocesan Centres.

At the national level, a North-South Dialogue Session among Clergy and Religious was held in order to facilitate experience-sharing and to foster closer understanding for the future. Arising from this program, a decision was taken to make Church representations to the Lessons Learnt and Reconciliation Commission (LLRC) and subsequently a Church delegation led by His Eminence Cardinal Malcolm Ranjith, Archbishop of Colombo appeared before the Commission and made its submissions which included important recommendations for the attainment of reconciliation and peace. The recently released and much looked forward to LLRC Report has in fact made mention of the Church submissions.

An initiative of the Bishops' Peace Task Force led to a visit to South Africa by a delegation of Catholic Bishops and Caritas officers to study the post-conflict reconciliation measures adopted in that country. On their return, the delegation members met the Minister of External Affairs and briefed him on their findings so that he may transmit them to the Government.

A comprehensive Human Rights Education Program is implemented through the Diocesan Centres in order to build a human rights culture in Sri Lanka. A school level Caritas HR Quiz Competition was received with much enthusiasm by students in several parts of the country. A Guidebook on Human Rights Through the Religious Perspective was developed following an interactive workshop for religious leaders of Christian, Hindu, Buddhist and Islamic faiths.

Caritas Sri Lanka also hosted a 10-day peace building training workshop organized jointly with Caritas Asia. The event brought together around 40 participants from India, Pakistan, Nepal, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka.

On the political front, we organized a dialogue session with young politicians from several political parties with a view to identifying "the role of future political leaders in the process of healing and reconciliation towards sustainable peace". The emphasis here was on younger politicians who may hold the key

to an entirely new approach in taking the country forward on a meaningful path.

Another recent Caritas initiative titled Interfaith Dialogue on Reconciliation brought together a number of religious dignitaries and created a platform for highlighting the role of religious leaders in the pursuit of peace and reconciliation.

Integral Human Development

The IHD Program is designed to promote holistic development of every person and his or her rights, responsibilities and human dignity. The program is focused on effectively empowering the poorest and marginalized communities so that they may gain access and control of resources and also participate in the decision-making process. IHD implements sector-wise activities targeting vulnerable communities such as farmers, fishermen, plantation workers and women.

Trainings in sustainable agriculture and rallies to protect farmers' rights have been accompanied by microcredit schemes operated at the grass root level by Self Help Groups established in all the Districts. The SHGs are strengthened through the formation of Community Based Organisations (CBOs) which will help to build a people's movement capable of demanding and sustaining an alternative model of economic development for Sri Lanka.

Resettlement process in the North and East

Caritas has always had a visible presence in the North and East, before, during and after the military conflict which ended in May 2009. Now, as people affected by war begin to pick up the broken pieces of their lives, Caritas is helping to put in place a rehabilitation and reconstruction program covering shelter, livelihood and other measures needed to effect an early return to normalcy. Nearly 2,000 transitional shelters were constructed for affected families, several houses were repaired and nearly 400 permanent homes built, while over 3,000 families were given livelihood support. The resettlers were also provided with 1,500 solar lamps and 1,660 bicycles as well as complementary food. Lost livelihood assets such as fishing boats and nets were restored to nearly 100 families. In addition, an important nutritional food program benefited nearly 3,000 children and it helped not only to boost their nutritional

levels but also improved their school attendance. Educational kits were distributed among nearly 5,500 students while monthly educational support was also given to around 1,800 children living in welfare centres and with relatives as well as children proceeding for higher studies. Besides, an innovative cash-for-work program benefited 27,500 persons. Vocational training was also given to around 50 persons.

In the field of psychosocial care, a program to help traumatized people served nearly 500 persons. Several volunteers have been trained under this program and they have been enlisted to supplement the work being done already by Diocesan staff. These joint teams have visited homes in several villages to collect data on persons who need psychosocial support. Many cases were referred to Mental Health Units of the area hospitals for further care.

Migrant workers' welfare

A large number of Sri Lankans work abroad as migrant workers, and although their earnings have boosted the country's economy, several women domestic workers who travelled to Middle Eastern countries have faced enormous difficulties such as abuse, harassment and even death. Caritas carries out programs on safe migration and prevention of human trafficking, including awareness creation, launch of publications such as guidebooks, case studies and research booklets in addition to producing documentary films and docudramas portraying the severe violation of human rights which these women have to undergo. We also mark International Migrants' Day in December every year and use the day's events not only to create advocacy with the government but also to highlight the stories of the exploited women.

Relief and rehabilitation

The major floods that occurred in several Districts in the latter part of 2010 and early 2011 called for a massive relief effort to help the nearly two million individuals who were badly affected by this disaster which destroyed large areas of cultivation, damaged several irrigation tanks, caused the deaths of thousands of cattle and poultry and partly or fully damaged nearly 75,000 houses. Our relief aid included cooked food, dry rations, non food and sanitary items, and bottled water. In the rehabilitation

phase, we have repaired some of the damaged houses, provided temporary shelters, helped farmers to purchase seed paddy and fertilizer, given livelihood support to many families and provided microcredit assistance to Self Help Groups.

Disaster preparedness

A Community Based Disaster Preparedness Program (CBDP) is being implemented in order to create resilience among communities towards future disasters. Trainings have been given on understanding hazards and disasters, in selected villages. Life-saving skills are part of such trainings. The CBDP signifies a shift from relief to preparedness, or from disaster response to disaster mitigation.

Psychosocial well-being

The psychosocial program begun in the North and East has been expanded to cover other Districts too. A Resource Pool of trainers has been created at National and Diocesan levels. Strong networks have been formed with Government institutions and non-Governmental organizations, thus enabling the sharing of knowledge and experience. Dioceses have conducted workshops on psychosocial well-being for groups of students, teachers, pre-school teachers, pregnant mothers, youth, and even entire families. Family relationships, interpersonal communication, stress management and spiritual living are dimensions taken up in the training workshops while the use of play therapy, water therapy and music therapy were also explored. Persons returning to normalcy from stress alcohol / drug addiction were also given psychosocial counseling. The events held on World Mental Health Day in October every year are an occasion for highlighting the importance and value of mental health which, along with physical and emotional well-being, is central to holistic development and human dignity.

Child Protection

Since launching the Caritas Child Protection Policy Manual in 2008, we have consistently and actively promoted it at all levels of society in order to call attention to the many difficulties, challenges, threats and dangers faced by children in today's society. A number



of awareness and conscientization programs on issues such as child rights, child protection and child care were conducted for different target groups including teachers, school Principals, caretakers of childrens' homes, Prison officials and Probation Officers.

Each of the 13 Caritas Diocesan Centres has formed 10 Children's Societies with a total membership of over 2,500 children countrywide.

Apart from this, educational scholarships are also given to nearly 1,400 poor children through a foster-parent scheme with well-wishers in Poland. Universal Children's Day in October every year is a forum for emphasizing the need to make our land a safe haven for children.

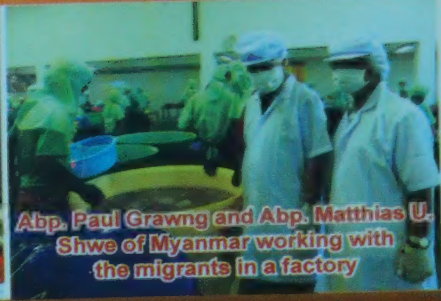
Capacity building

A number of capacity building training workshops have been conducted to enhance the skills of National and Diocesan staff in various program areas such as Child Rights, Safe Migration, Microfinance, Prevention of Human Trafficking, Sustainable Agriculture, Human Rights, Project Planning, Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting.





Bp. Joseph Ponniah of Sri Lanka feeding a Victim of HIV/AIDS



Abp. Paul Grawng and Abp. Matthias U. Shwe of Myanmar working with the migrants in a factory



Bp. Berard Oshikawa of Japan physically challenged Migrant

CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE FABC OFFICE OF HUMAN DEVELOPMENT TO THE CHURCH IN ASIA IN 2011 (Animation, Coordination and Dissemination)

I. ANIMATION: MEETINGS AND WORKSHOPS BY OHD

- ★ **AISA-VIII:** Asian Institute for Social Advocacy: Pattaya, Thailand, 26-29 July, 2011
- ★ **BISA-VIII:** Bishops Institute of Social Action: Bangkok, Thailand, January, 17-25, 2012
- ★ **SARC:** South Asia Regional Consultation: Mumbai, India, October 14-16, 2011

II. COORDINATION WITH FAITH BASED AND RIGHTS BASED ORGANISATION

- ★ *Commissions for Justice and Peace / Migration / Indigenous Peoples*
- ★ *Persons in charge of the Social apostolates in Religious Congregations*
- ★ *Church based Organisations*

III. DISSEMINATION - PUBLICATION OF BOOKS, BOOKLETS, CDS AND DVD

- ① **AISA-VIII CD** with articles and powerpoints
- ② **BISA VIII DVD** with Powerpionts and video clips on the sharing of the Bishops
- ③ **AISA-VIII: Booklet** - for the trainers and grass roots coordinators
- ④ **BISA VIII booklet** with articles, input sessions and country reports
- ⑤ **Book** on the socio-pastoral advocacy for Migrants and IPs of Asia
- ⑥ **Book** on the Catholic Social teaching in the context of Asia
- ⑦ **Book** on the South Asian Symposium
- ⑧ **DVD on Climate Change and Global Warming:** from Joint Conference by FABC and Misereor

PROGRAMMES FOR 2012

- ✦ **SEARC:** South East Asia Regional Consultation - Concrete plans for the problem of IPs and Migrants
- ✦ **EARC:** East Asia Regional Consultation - *Workshop on Peace Building*
- ✦ **AISA - IX:** For Episcopal Commissions: *Workshop on Climate Change and Global Warming*
- ✦ **BISA-IX** - For Bishops: Golden Jubilee Celebration of Vatican II (Vatican II+50 in Asia)

OHD-FABC Team: Chairperson: Archbishop Charles Bo SDB, Myanmar
Executive Secretary: Fr. Nithiya OFM. Cap.

Members of OHD Bishops Committee: 1. Abp. Anicetus Sinaga, Indonesia 2. Abp. Joseph Coutts, Pakistan
3. Bp. Isao Kikuchi, Japan 4. Bp. Cornelius Sim, Brunei

For Further Contacts:

Fr. Nithiya OFM. Cap (nithiyas@gmail.com), Executive Secretary, OHD-FABC, Chennai, India
Mobile: +91-94455 48000 Email: nithiyas@gmail.com

